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Truth & Movies

CHINESE FILM

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PLUS • REVIEWS • INTERVIEWS • WISDOM



DESIGNED BY
PAUL WILLOUGHBY



Jay Ma

Now is the time

AUTHOR AND CRITIC MARK COUSINS TRACES THE ROOTS OF CHINESE CINEMA'S GLOBAL RESONANCE AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW CULTURAL REVOLUTION.

This much we are told:

China is the fastest-growing economy in the world, the next superpower. Economists praise and editorialise. In everything from *The New York Times*, to *Foreign Affairs* and *The Hindu*, say so. So does the DTI, loudly, to British business. A rapprochement with China – an attempt at understanding and heretofore relations – is taking place.

Few would doubt that to engage with the stories and images from a country is a good way to understand it, and no art form connects story and image more engagingly than cinema. The worst in the cinema, as the lights go down, of a window opening on a world where film will pluck to bring the lives and ideas, pleasures and realities, conditions and aspirations of a country vividly alive.

IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT, when asked by the University of Edinburgh if I would be co-artistic director, with Dr Dorota Olszewska, of 'Gems of China', their new UK-wide festival of Chinese film, I immediately said yes. More personally, for years now I have carried in my head vivid scenes from Chinese film – characters, gestures, stings, widescreen compositions, rather of feeling and cinematic nudity – that are almost unknown in the West.

The overnight success we and all those who love the innovation and aesthetic richness of China's social melodramas, musicals, art movies and action dramas. When Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* rang the world box office bell in 2000 and, in its action scenes, seemed to defy gravity, we yelled, "Yes, but what about King Hu's *A Touch of Zen*?" Its sword fight scenes in bamboo forests defied gravity just as astonishingly, but way back in 1959. It is one of the greatest films ever made, but people in the West hardly know it.

When Zhang Yimou's *Hero* was the first Chinese film to go to number one at the American box office in 2004, we sensed that now might be the moment to tell the big, complex, fascinating story of Chinese language cinema so that more people might begin to carry its splendid moments around in their heads, which is the way most of us remember movies. Hence 'Chinese Cinema', which will play all over the UK, showing 25 films from eight decades, with 20 lectures on the cinematic, aesthetic, social and political history of China.



The Curse of the Golden Flower
Left Without Earth

WE BELIEVE THAT NOW IS THE TIME for six reasons, beyond the economic one just mentioned. The first is something to do with the city of Shanghai. In the 1930s, it was a boomtown – cosmopolitan, open to the world because it was a port, and developing at an extraordinary rate. Now, in 2007, it is a boomtown – cosmopolitan, open to the world, and developing at an even more extraordinary rate. Then it was the centre of the Chinese film industry. Nearly a decade before Italian neo-realism, which every film buff knows about, Chinese movies of the '30s

– the country's first cinematic golden age – were fiercely realistic in their themes, beautifully under-noted and brightly aware of social truths.

One of those truths then, as now is that at times of rapid urbanisation, and the replacement of vast populations, people get left behind. They wonder what the accelerated pace of life, this rapid post-modernity means, and how they square it with their more traditional selves. Shanghai cinema of the '30s – films ▼

like *The Goddess* (Yu Yanggang, 1934, the first film in the world to portray a prostitute sympathetically) – register acutely the social problems and psychic penalties created by such change. And now, in modern China, films like *Golden Pleasures* (Jia Zhangke, 2000) do exactly the same. Jump from Shanghai to Taipei in Taiwan and you find that style, most distinguished recent filmmaker, Tai Ming-hong, at its best, in *Vive L'Amour* (1994) and *The Hole* (1998), with exactly the same themes: welfare people, unable to connect with modern life.

SO CHINESE FILMMAKING HAS, in the last seven decades, come full circle. The second reason why Chinese language cinema is relevant now relates to the first: in every period of social change in China, which is most of the last century, women have been cinema's central characters. Director Zhang Yimou once said, "What I want to express is the Chinese people's opposition and confinement. Women express this more clearly on their bodies because they bear a heavier burden than men." From the 1930s onwards, Chinese cinema has proved his point.

One story from that first decade jumps out. The star of *The Goddess*, Ruai Lingyu, luminously captured the modernity of her character, yet behind the actress her life was hell. In teleobsessed Shanghai, the tabloids called her a loose woman and hounded her. The pressure became unbearable so, at the age of 25, she committed suicide. The *New York Times* carried the news of her death on page one. Her funeral procession was three miles long. She was, in her day, one of the most famous actresses in the world. Today, most film books don't even mention her.

Fast-forward to China in the '60s. Gang Li stars out of *Ju Dou* (1960) and *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991) with the same suffering defiance as Ruai. Once again, female stories in expressing the agonies of social change and a defiance of the old Confucian order, where women stayed at home. Both films are about homes as prisons. Since these films, Zhang Ziyi has emerged as the newest star in Chinese language film and, to complete another story, the wonderful Maggie Cheung played Ruai Lingyu in *Centre Stage* (Stanley Kwan, 1992).

The third reason for looking at Chinese film now is that that stage on which women have stood so centrally, is in fact three stages.

To follow the story of Chinese language cinema, you have to jump between the People's Republic, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Maoist Revolution in 1949 caused rightist filmmakers to leave for Hong Kong and Taiwan. Hong Kong looked westwards and developed a commercial filmmaking tradition. The nationalists in Taiwan repressed public freedoms, so only after they lost power in the late '80s did master studios like Hou Hsiao-hsien, Edward Yang, and Tai Ming-hong emerge. Hong Kong director Wong Kar Wai's *In the Mood for Love* (2000) is about Shanghai exiles living in Hong Kong in the '40s, people who would have grown up with the films of Kuan. Not only did populations migrate between the three territories, but filmmakers did, and film styles and genres too. The drama and energy in mainland musicals morphed into action and Kung Fu cinema in Hong Kong, for example. Only by tracing these migrations do we see how rich Mandarin and Cantonese cinema is.

The fourth reason to look at Chinese cinema is that a new genre has emerged. China has started making depictions, 'big films', in the Hollywood mode with all-star casts and an emphasis on action. The first depiction was Zhang Yimou's *Hero*, and his latest, *Conquest of the Golden Flower*, pushes the genre further, extending the size of the cast and multiplying the descriptive detail in the imagery. Zhang was a cinematographer before he became a director, so this helps explain such astonishing visuals. But, more interestingly, he studied Chinese painting too and has talked about how its scrolls, its landscapes dotted with tiny characters, and its horizons at the very top of the image, have all influenced his own imagery. The new depiction film might well copy Hollywood epic cinema in some respects, but their compositions are very Chinese.

The fifth reason for taking a new interest in Chinese film can be seen in the very same films of Zhang. Western film like *Titanic* and *Tip-Top* show how computer-generated imagery has changed the language of cinema, but the Chinese, specifically Zhang, have used it both with more bravura and subtlety than most Western directors. In fact, perhaps in part because the Chinese film industry, like other sectors, is a command economy, the People's Republic seems to have been able to make more emphatic decisions about CGI and the digitisation of film in general.



Left: *The Goddess*
Above right: *Golden Pleasures*



A whole new university is being set up to look at how digital can be combined with the more traditional visual arts. The government has earmarked \$10 million per year to digitize films that were shot on 35mm and are deteriorating – a service to film history which should be repeated in other countries. And, satisfyingly, given the ridiculous and inconsistent censorship that Mandarin filmmakers have had to endure, shooting digitally, on small cameras, has fuelled underground cinema on the mainland, bringing to the screen stories and situations that previously languished beneath the radar.

THE SIXTH AND FINAL REASON why now is the time to discover Chinese film is the most profound of all: Hollywood has always been driven by action. 'What happens next?' Hong Kong cinema has, since the '70s at least, been kinetic too, but if we draw back for a moment and look at the overall picture of Chinese language cinema, we begin to realize that action is somewhat different in it. *A Touch of Zen*, for example, is full of it but, also, as its title implies, movement in the movie is counterbalanced by an almost Buddhist sense of repose.

In Buddhist aesthetics, *wu wei* ('emptiness') is a compositional element and, throughout Chinese cinema, including, nobly, in such famous breakthrough films as Chen Kaige's *Yellow Earth* (1984), stasis, emptiness and ellipsis are as much a part of the shape of the film, its mood and effect, as action, narrative or psychology. Add to this another philosophical influence – Daoism –

which rejects both the social and gender certainties of Confucius and is very different to the class certainties of Marxism, and you get a second explanation for the profound and very satisfying aesthetic balance in Chinese film. It was there in *The Goddess* way back in the misty golden age of the 1930s and it's there, still, in the extraordinary *Crane of the Golden Flower*.

If I had to choose one film to sum up this balance, one film through which to fall in love with Chinese language cinema, it would be Fei Mu's exquisite *Spring in a Small Town* (1948), voted China's best film of all time by the Hong Kong Film Critics Society in 2002. It's rarely seen in the West, and the print is not in great shape, but this story of a woman caught in a love triangle in a ruined town is a work of poetic realism that outstrips anything made in France or Japan at the same time. In particular, the character's voiceover devastatingly renders her inner life with fine grain.

Chinese cinema is full of such remarkable characters. It is, surely, time to get to know them and their worlds. ■

All of the above films are showing in 'Cinema China' in March and April 2007, www.cinemachina.org.uk. The Festival is an initiative of the University of Edinburgh and its Confucius Institute, is managed and hosted by Filmhouse Edinburgh, funded by the National Lottery, Scottish Screen and the Scottish Executive, and partnered by the Beijing Film Academy.

See page 122 for an interview with Mark Gonsky on 'Cinema China'

CHINA CINEMA 101

WORDS BY DAVID JENKINS

Kickstart
your
collection
of Chinese
films with
this guide
to some
currently
available
classics.



PLATFORM (1996)
DIR. JIA ZHANG KE

Opening on the death of Mao Tse-tung in 1976, Jia Zhang Ke's film (only his second) observes the 16-year period of cultural change which then occurred in China. The film is drawn together via the members of a state theatre troupe who stage propaganda plays, and whose lives are all irrevocably changed when government reforms encourage the cultural influence of the West. The name *Platform* actually derives from a hit Chinese pop song released in the early '80s. It may sound light-hearted, but the film, unsurprisingly, soars as a social piece, with plenty of cinematic language and shots that last for an age. The director is also considered a leading figure of the 'Sixth Generation' of Chinese directors. [www.aaa.com.cn/enr](#)

RAISE THE RED LANTERN (1991)
DIR. ZHANG YIMOU

He may now make a living from levity and exuberant martial arts epics, but this 1991 period drama is Zhang Yimou's greatest work to date. As her former fate consumes Duke II out for the affections of a feckle master whose face Yimou never shows us, our allegiance wanders between the apparently warring second mistress to the eunuchs, operating third mistress and then to Gong Li's husband and not wholly likeable fourth mistress. Yimou skillfully contrasts the symmetry and fixed traditions of society in '70s China with the troublingly asymmetrical and flexibly skewed means of human transaction and love, portraying unpleasant characters who are very much the result of an unpleasant time. Stylistically, the film is quietly epic, presenting the director's attention to crisp, minute detail. [www.aaa.com.cn/enr](#)



CHUNGKING EXPRESS (1994)
DIR. WONG KAR WAI

Just as everyone has a favourite colour, Jilly Bely, people often split on their favourite Wong Kar Wai film. *Chungking Express* (the black Jilly Bely of his oeuvre) undoubtedly combines the best elements of his patented visual panache with his wondrously woven lines of the blissful private fantasies of regular Jaxx and Antonia. Split into two overlapping chapters, the first deals with a depressed cop (Ethan Chan) and his chance meeting with drug trafficking heroin Brigitte Lin, and contains an inspired scene involving expired pineapple charlies. The second involves the neurotic almost-romance between carefree cop Tony Leung and meaty truck worker Faye Wong. For fans of the *Memento* and the *Paper* 'California Dreaming' especially, *Chungking Express* is the double lobby win. [www.aaa.com.cn/enr](#)

ELECTION (2005)
DIR. JOHNNY TO

This postmodern riff on the trademarked brief movie is a expertly executed examination of the rules of crime in modern-day Hong Kong, starring Johnny To regular Simon Yam as the fairly men who have the Hong Kong underworld in his spare time, the film concentrates more on ceremony and ritual than gun battles and action set pieces. Indeed, there isn't a single shot fired in the film, much of the violence being dispensed via the use of blunt instruments. The title refers to the election which takes place within the triad society to find a new boss, and the hell that breaks loose when the psychotic Big D (Tony Leung) decides to stage a coup. [www.aaa.com.cn/enr](#)



A ONE AND A TWO (1999)

DIR. EDWARD YANG

Alongside Hou Hsiao-hsien and Tsai Ming-liang, Yang remains at the fore of the so-called Taiwanese New Wave, and to Western audiences the Altman-esque *A One and A Two* remains his most well-known work. Taking the form of a realist soap opera, staged in the Taiwanese capital of Taipei (as are most of his films), this gaudy, sprawling movie documents the tiny emotional ripples of a regular middle class family as they each face traumas of varying scale and import. The terminal stress of patriarch Niu's mother acts as the nucleus of the film, her bedside vigils becoming a place where the characters confess and examine their problems. The growth and gradual enlightenment of the family also acts as a metaphor for Taipei itself, with business, art, tradition and identity all competing for space in the twilight. It's a tragic and funny film with a heart as big as China itself. **AVAILABLE ON DVD, OR ALSO AVAILABLE IN GERMAN DOLBY DIGI**

SOLOING (1996)

DIR. LOU YE

The faster than whip-Scott through Shanghai acts as the central character as Lou Ye's Hitchcockian psychodrama, which soars across like an Eastern *Un Verito*. As a wandering commoner finds his girlfriend as a mermaid, he happens one day across an ex-con who takes into his camera about the same girl, even though the two have never met. However, he chooses not to take the same element of the film into the story world of Lynch, instead offering a gentle, yet engaging vision of chaos in the city. **AVAILABLE ON DVD**



INFERNAL AFFAIRS (2002)

DIR. MAK SIU PAI, ANDREW LAU

While many acclaimed Martin Scorsese's *The Departed* as the best remake of an Asian film to date, you only need to re-watch this original to see the cream of sophistication that still exists between the two. The pacing of the first 45 minutes is unforgivably tough, frantically setting the scene for one of the great plot convicts of the twenty-first century: a police mole infiltrates a group of Irish while a young blind infiltrates a detective unit. Who can tumble the house of cards by uncovering the other first? Both daringly complex and diamond hard, the film took cop thrillers to a new plateau and proved that the Hong Kong that had nurtured talents such as Ringo Lam and John Woo was still in fine fettle. It also produced two sequels, the first of which some consider to be an improvement on the original. **AVAILABLE ON DVD**

YIFEI (LANTERN) (1994)

DIR. TSAI HING-LIANG

Similar to his forthcoming *The Wayward Cloud*, this 1994 film presents the apartment block as microcosm by exploring the idea that the people we see, but don't connect with, from day-to-day can often shape our lives far better or worse. Considered another key player in the New Taiwanese Cinema, director Tsai Ming-liang's male scholastic, thoroughly engaging film follows a beautiful real estate agent who has no personal life, the street vendor she sometimes picks up for casual sex, and a third salesman struggling to grasp his sexual identity. All are tied up in the same apartment, and are photographed in a series of lingering takes. The film shares similar themes of alienation and emotional frustration as Wong Kar Wai's *Chungking Express*, but couldn't be more different in terms of style and composition. It also contains a patch of a fine scene. **AVAILABLE ON DVD**



THREE TIMES (2005)

DIR. HOU HSIAO-HSIEN

This cinematic blotch of emotionally fraught love stories set respectively in 1955, 1947 and 2005 – all three starring the same pair of actors (Shu Qi and Cheng Chen) – is the sweetest lesson from director Hou Hsiao-hsien. As we witness the intricacies of their courtship via the context of three very different backdrops, it becomes increasingly clear that Hou's not-so-hidden agenda is to throw down some heavy concepts and bold symbolism instead of offering anything that might be described as a candid reflection on the nature of blossoming love. However, his commitment to slow, unadorned takes place him squarely in the tradition of directors such as Ozu and Bresson, as well as, as he does, to capture life in all its joyous and miserable glory. **AVAILABLE ON DVD**

PARALLEL MY CONSCIENCE (1993)

DIR. CHEN KAIJE

This crime period drama from Fifth Generation Chinese-American director Chen Kaije was tainted with police and awards on its initial release in 1993. Watching it again now, the film still balances an expensive scope with awesome strength of heart, a feat seldom achieved by the elite of today which, in contrast, seem to be all surface and no feeling. It opens on the harsh-trappings of open school, where two young prodigies are learning the trade the hard way. When they meet years later at an open house in Peking, their friendship is rekindled until a prostitute played by Chinese movie queen Gong Li upsets their fragile equilibrium. Successfully prying hell-a-century's worth of social and political history into its three hour run time, the film works as an expensive and searching meditation between the child and friends, as well as teasing the many draconian measures implemented by the Chinese government over the years. **AVAILABLE ONLY DVD**



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INLAND



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15 LANGUAGE: SOME STRONG LANGUAGE
SMOKING, DRUGS, SOME DRUG USE


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THIS YEAR THAT DESERVES TO BE CALLED ART.
A DAZZLING FEARLESS LAURA DERN"

MANOHLA DARGIS, NEW YORK TIMES

"MORE OUT-THERE GENIUS FROM THE KING OF WEIRD"
★★★★★ UNCUT

IN THE UK, THE FILM IS CLASSIFIED AS '15' BY THE BBFC. IN THE US, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS 'R' BY THE MPAA. IN THE EU, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY THE ESRB. IN THE AU, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS 'MA15+' BY THE FFC. IN THE NZ, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY THE FIC. IN THE CA, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18+' BY THE CRTC. IN THE IN, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS 'U' BY THE Censor Board. IN THE BR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '16' BY the ICA. IN THE AR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '16' BY the ICA. IN THE CL, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE CO, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE CR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE CZ, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE DE, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE DK, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE EE, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE ES, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE FI, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE FR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE GR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE HK, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE HU, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE IE, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE IL, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE IN, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS 'U' BY the Censor Board. IN THE IT, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE JP, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE KR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE LV, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE LT, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE LU, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE NL, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE NO, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE NZ, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE PL, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE PT, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE RO, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE RU, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE SE, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE SI, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE SK, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE SM, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE TH, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE TR, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE TW, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE UA, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE US, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS 'R' BY the MPAA. IN THE VE, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE VN, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE ZA, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA. IN THE ZW, IT IS CLASSIFIED AS '18' BY the ICA.

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Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the
whole revolutionary machine."

Chairman Mao Tse-tung
Quotation from Mao Tse-tung

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www.filmclub.co.uk or www.fopp.co.uk



LETTERS

This month we've got 24-hour postal protection from the eco-warriors. We'll offer them a free subscription, but we're not convinced it'll cut the mustard.

FURRY FRIENDSHIP

I am writing to you about the appalling comment of your reader GORDY RE TITTLE about Jane. I am writing you respectfully to the article "For GORDY".

I have looked at in several times and almost every difference in interpretation of potential misunderstanding as my side. It is every time I have opened the pages of complex about as your education of animal culture. I cannot believe in this day and age that you would encourage others to "get their hands" from Jane. There is no reason in the language of this world. It is impossible that killing animals for food is good and animal that there is pleasure in it.

This is disgusting and pathetic to your part.

THE REASONING is by and large excellent but it is almost as if you are uncomfortable with the allusion with this phrase: "I believe in freedom of speech as a religiously forward-thinking society." I believe that you and Jane are in leading movements in our modern society. But to see

what you have done in your own high school newspaper where we understand and understood to each other your publications.

What are you thinking? DO YOU HAVE THIS? I am writing to you as you must accept full responsibility with the article. So I want you again, how can you justify this?

General Musings

It is our nature to feel that the article in question is clearly inappropriate and, on several occasions, makes quite obvious our personal doubts for the practice of having such opinions. However, as the article implies, there is a different view, and we respect their right to be made aware of their options. Please don't disturb our office.

BEGINNER'S LOVE

Though I'd write to say I posted up my last issue yesterday (the 84th) I posted partly because I liked the cover. I didn't realize that what you think would be just an attractive-looking! This response is what I've been looking for. THANK YOU!

• **IMMEDIATELY, IMMEDIATELY** Interview and reviews, bookish layout and he did it. Keep up the good work and I'll keep reading.

On the Horizon

BERNAL NOT BANAL

FRANCIS ENJOYED YOUR LECTURE WITH BERNAL AND MICHEL, especially as she has said she is political! You had the opportunity to talk about the proper manner surrounding the film rather than just "Bern's is like to be forgotten." Considering the other "last" scene in *Bernal* and the fact that this could so easily have been a piece documenting a woman's life and her shockingly controversial at all in it, it's more to me a very actually got over the obvious cinema and art open minded, interesting questions too.

GOOGLE GAFF

SHOCKING! Did you perhaps not understand what Bernal - she was not alone just over the little *AMERICA* cinema in the Phoenix House? That would be an odd subject for the book. THANK YOU FOR THE BOOK.

"BERNAL" and your book. I am in going to be the Phoenix! Bernal, google is your friend.

July

As it happens this was the best of the world. The reason that should certainly be obvious.

CHAPTER DISASTER

THAT'S MY CHAPTERS ARE ALL mixed up in the last issue. Understanding of you nature?

Edie Bonner
We missed.

PRETTY AS A PICTURE

The photo of Bernal, Interview and Edie Bonner in the photo show. With some of the best I've seen, and like nothing I've ever before in a film magazine. There was actually some amazing and probably that was because, and in just one shot you managed to convey exactly why Carl Geller Bernal in the dark goes up for real cinema.

Paul Roberts

Expect plenty more amazing photography in upcoming issues. We're going pretty crazy. You see us.

THIS YEAR'S UNMISSABLE FANTASY EPIC

JEFF BRIDGES

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LWL was put together by a bunch of like-minded friends and colleagues in January 2001. Two years and 10 issues later, nothing has changed about the way we feel or the kind of magazine we want to make.

Our aim is to be honest, passionate, and unmerciful – while making a magazine that reads great and looks cool *enough*. We hope you've enjoyed it so far.

[illegible]

THE IRON CURTAIN
IS OPEN
識 The Great Wall
IS BREACHED
IT'S TIME TO REORIENT THE COMPASS OF
POP CULTURE
THE FUTURE IS
PAST 愛活學



FREEDOM
WRITER.

Chinese-born writer Yiyun Li became an overnight sensation when her first collection of short stories, *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers*, was published in 2006. Here, she introduces an excerpt from one of those stories, *Immortality*.

INTERVIEW BY HANF BUCHHEIT

Yiyun: I was 16 years old in 1989 when Tiananmen rolled through Tiananmen Square. Two years later came a sort of enforced military training, a government initiative to inculcate the communist ethos of China's youth. They asked for the result of the People's Army. She was caught reading Hemingway in a communist bath club but escaped punishment, and eventually escaped China altogether.

At the age of 26, she moved to America. She started writing because she was "tired of loneliness" and discovered a talent for short stories that would see her first book *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers* win, among others, the Guardian First Book Award. "*A Thousand Years* is a meditative collection that reflects on life in contemporary China through the prism of Yiyun's American experience. Despite describing the discovery of her talent as a fluke, stories from the collection have been published in *The New Yorker*, *Londoner*, *Albion*, *Story*, *Prospect* and *The Paris Review*. That's not bad for an English-translated writer in a second language.

Though she cautions to bring "a private person," Yiyun spoke exclusively to *UNLies*.

UNLies: What do you remember of the authoritarianism of the Chinese government when you were young?

Li: As children we were constantly warned to be obedient, not to rebel, not to talk back. We were told that our parents had certain things — like talking about an uncle who fought against the communist army in the civil war — and later went to Taiwan — stayed within the family. There was always this hidden fear, although later that was less pressing when the changes in the 80s started.

UNLies: *Immortality* is very measured, but there's anger just below the surface — would you say that's fair?

Li: Well, I'm not an angry person, so I would hesitate to put the word "anger." It's more disillusionment, I think.

UNLies: Can you talk us through the process of writing it? Did it bring up painful memories?

Li: When I was in China in 1984, it was the 100-year birthday of Chairman Mao, and at all of a sudden there was this fervent admiration for this dictator. I remember seeing an imperatorist of him, and I was amazed and shocked because the guy had been dead for 20 years. I always wanted to write a story about this dictator's imperatorist so immortality became the first short story I wrote. A story with two layers: one is the imperatorist and it's his story, but it's also our story, our immortality story.

UNLies: There's a line about how the Americans will "never know of our loss for them" that's emblematic of the gulf in understanding between East and West. Was that apparent at the time?

Li: Yes. When I was growing up I thought most people in the Western world suffered, and I was so happy that we had been liberated. That was the common idea at the time, that we were going to liberate the Western world.

UNLies: When did you get a sense that that was not really the case?

Li: It came gradually. My father used to work next door to a place called The Wedding Hotel. Back then it was the only place that foreigners could live. I went there once, and on this side of the hotel was red, and on the other side were white beds from Western countries. They were using beds.

I thought that they lived in heaven! That's just an example of how I saw that they had all these things that I didn't have.

UNLies: You're yet to write in Chinese because, you've said, it was a language you never used to express your emotions. Will that change?

Li: No. I know my Chinese got stuck somewhere. ■

Immortality

SYNOPSIS: IN A VILLAGE A BOY IS BORN WITH THE FACE OF CHAIRMAN MAO. THOUGH HIS FATHER HAS BEEN EXECUTED FOR COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY BELIEFS, THE BOY'S FACE TAKES HIM TO BEIJING WHERE HE BECOMES, FOR HIS VILLAGE, A LIVING SYMBOL OF HISTORY AS THE OFFICIAL IMPERSONATOR OF THE DICTATOR. AFTER MAO'S DEATH, THE FALL OF COMMUNISM BRINGS THE MEANING OF THE DICTATOR'S LIFE INTO QUESTION, AND THE BOY - NOW A MAN - WILL EVENTUALLY RETURN TO HIS VILLAGE IN DISGRACE TO PERFORM A SHOCKING ACT THAT WILL COMPLETE AN ANCIENT CYCLE OF EVENTS.

The day the dictator claims the communist victory in our country, a young carpenter in our town comes home to his newly wedded wife.

"It says we are going to have a new life from now on," the young wife tells the husband, pointing to a loudspeaker on their roof.

"New or old, life is the same," the husband replies. He gets his wife into bed and makes love to her, his eyes half-closed in ecstasy while the loudspeaker is broadcasting a new song, with men and women repeating the same lyrics over and over.

This is how the son is conceived, in a climate of Communism as so proud, so proud, so proud. The same song is broadcast day after day, and the young mother hums along, touching her growing belly, and gazing carefully the dictator's pictures

from newspapers. Of course we never call him the dictator. We call him Our Father, Our Saviour, the North Star of Our Lives, the Newer Rising Sun of Our Era. Like most women of her generation, the mother is distant. Yet unlike others, she likes to look at newspapers, and she saves the pictures of the dictator in a thick notebook. Isn't she the woman with the greatest wisdom in our town?

The son is born with the dictator's face, a miracle undecoded by us at first. For the next 10 years we will avoid looking at him, for fear we will see his dead father in his face. The father was a hardworking man, nice to his neighbors, good to his wife. We would never have imagined that he would be an enemy of our newborn communist nation. Yet there are witnesses, not one, but a whole mob of existing smokers.

What gets him killed is his comment about heresies and deos. At this time, we respect the communist power above us as our big brother. In our big brother country, the Soviet Union, it is said, women are encouraged to produce babies for the communist cause, and those who have given birth to a certain number of babies are granted the title mother hero. Now that we are on the same highway to the same heaven, the dictator decides to adopt the same policy.

The young carpenter is a little drunk when he jokes aloud to his fellow drinkers, "Mother heros? My son has given birth to 30 babies in a litter. Shouldn't she be granted a title too?"

That's it, a malicious attack on the dictator's reputation policy. The carpenter is executed after a public trial. All but his wife attend the meeting, every one of us sticking our fists high and waving the People's History, our anemic voice shouting out the wife's name from her bed. We should sleep when the bullet hits the young man's head. We chant revolutionary songs when his body is paraded in the street. When we finally take our soles from execution, we hear the boy's first cry loud and proud, and for a moment, it is difficult for us to look into one another's eyes. What have we done to a mother and baby? Wasn't the dead young man one of our brothers?

What we do not know, at the time, is that a scholar in the capital has been thrown in jail and tortured to death for predicting a population explosion and calling for the dictator to change the policy. Nor do we know that in a meeting with the leader of the big brother country in Moscow, the dictator has said that we do not fear another world war or nuclear weapons. Let the Americans drop the atomic bombs on our heads. We have 500 million people in our nation. Even if half of us are killed, we still have 250 million, and these 250 million would produce another 250 million in no time.

Later, when we read his words in the newspaper, our blood boils. For the years to come, we will live with our eyes turned to the sky, waiting for the American bombs to rain down on us, willing to praise to the dictator our courage, and our loyalty. ♥





For years we do not know if it is a blessing or a disaster that a boy with the dictator's face lies among us. We treat the boy and his mother as the most precious and the most fragile treasure we have, never breathing one word about them to an outsider.

"It may not be a good thing," our old people warn us, and tell us the story of one of our Grand Fathers, who happened to have the same nickname as the emperor and was thrown into a well to drown. "There are things that are not allowed to exist in dictatorships," the old people say.

Yet none of us dares to say one disrespectful word about the boy's face. As he grows older, he looks more and more like the dictator. Sometimes as we walk past him in the street, there is a surge of warmth in our chests, as if the dictator himself were with us. This is the time when the dictator becomes larger than the animals in our nation. Dictator's households who have used old newspapers as wallpaper and who have, accidentally, reversed the titles with the dictator's name in them are executed. Parents of little first-graders who have mispelled the dictator's name are sent to labor camps. With the boy lying among us, we are constantly walking on a thin layer of ice above deep water.

Our young men become the sole face that represents the dictator in the nation, and thus start the most glorious years of his life. Movies about the dictator, starring our young men, are filmed by the government men move factory. Back in town, we cram into our only theaters and watch the movies, secretly blaming our mothers or wives for not having given birth to a great face.

The young men are soon preoccupied with his new role to know such stories. He appears in the national celebrations for all the holidays. His most loyal audience, we sit at night long in front of the television and wait for his appearance. On the screen, men and women sing and dance with hearty smiles on their faces like well-trained kindergarten children. Children four or five years old flirt with one another, singing love songs to the joyful parents. At such moments, those of us who think a little more than others start to feel uneasy, haunted by a strange fear that our people are growing down instead of growing up. But the young varieties when our young men, the dictator's impersonator, shows up. People on the screen stand up in ovation and hold out their hands to be shaken. Young women with the pinkest faces rush to him with bouquets of flowers. Kids swarm around him and call him by the name of the dictator. Nostalgic tears fill everyone's eyes. For a moment we believe time has stopped. The dictator is still alive among us, and we are happily being in his sons.

But time has sneaked by while we were mesmerized by our young men's face. Now we have Barry and Penelope; we have Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson. We have imported movies in which men and women hold hands freely in the street, and they even kiss each other without a trace of fear in their eyes. Our life, we realize, is not as happy as we have been taught to think. People in those capitalist countries are not waiting for us to be their liberators. They never know of our love for them.

This must be a difficult period for our young men as well. Biographies and memoirs about the dictator appear overnight like spring grass. Unlike the books written collectively by the government-appointed writing groups, these books soon trouble the moment they appear. Soon they are decided to be illegal publications, and are confiscated and burned in great piles. Yet some of the words have spread out, bad words about the dictator. Words to mouth the famous threat, how under his reign 50 million people have died from famine and political persecution. But if you looked at the number closely, you would realize that is far less than what the dictator was willing to sacrifice to American nuclear bombs. So what is all the fuss about?

Still, we start to think about what we have been led to believe all these years. Once doubt starts, it runs rampant in our hearts like wildfire. Our young men face appears on the television regularly, but the face has lost its aura. Those of us who have been waiting for his proposal are eager to tell our daughters to the first offer available. The young man's mother, now a glamorous old woman, walks in the street and grabs whenever she can to tell his stories, none of which impresses as anyone. From the mother we have learned he is touring across the nation with our present leader, a trio designed to inspire our national belief in communism. So what? We ask, and walk away before the mother has the chance to elaborate.

The fear ends early when a protest breaks out in the capital. Thousands of people rally for democracy in the center of the capital, where the dictator's memorial museum is less and less visited. Threatened and infuriated, our present leader orders the army to fire machine guns at the protesters. Admonishing as the event is, it slips out of memory as soon as the dead are buried to ashes in the state-supervised crematorium. The leader has said, as we later read in newspapers, that he is willing to kill 200,000 lives in exchange for 20 years of communist stability. Flattered by such numbers, we will echo his words and applaud his wisdom when we are required to publicly condemn those killed in the incident.

In no time the big brother country above us no longer exists. Then one-by-one our comrades in arms take bars ending the historical stage. Confused as we are, we do not know what to think of them, whether we should cry, rejoice, or only think. ■

Extracted from *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers* by Yiyun Li. Published by Fourth Estate © Yiyun Li 2006

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NEVER MIND THE

BubBles


WORDS BY SUSANNE MESSNER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JACQ DEVIS



When German music journalist Susanne Messner heard that Beijing's rock scene was about to explode, she went to check it out for herself. The result was the documentary, *Beijing Bubbles*. She gives *LWLies* the inside track on its making.

The first time I travelled to China was in early spring 2004. When one of the friends in the group I travelled with told me there were a lot of interesting bands in Beijing, I was more than alarmed. For over two years I had been watching all the Chinese movies which were screened at the film festivals I was able to attend, and I had tried to read all the Chinese novels which had been translated into German or English. I wanted to learn everything about a country which everyone says is going to overtake us soon. As I'd started my journalistic career writing about popular culture – especially about punk and rock music – I was very keen on getting to know punk and rock music in China.

The only rock musician we had ever heard of before was Cai Jie, a guy in his forties who is said to be the godfather of rock 'n' roll in China, and who used to sing protest songs during the democracy movement in 1989. But the first band we met in Beijing was Hang On The Box, and it is no wonder that they became one of the most important bands in Beijing: *Bubbles*, a documentary that we hadn't even thought of until then. When we first met the girls we were simply blown away. Wang Yue, Yina and Shengyao (who unfortunately has since left the band) were so part, almost arrogant – they knew how to dress, how to behave and what to say. They were completely unlike the older generation who we thought of as representing Chinese rock. And what we found almost more inspiring than this: they seemed to know more about cool new bands from Europe than we did. ♥



George Lindt, who was with us too, had just finished a music documentary on some German bands from Hamburg and Berlin, and he was planning to release it on the record label he had run since the early '90s. He immediately had the idea of shooting *Hang On The Box*, and from that point it didn't take long until we decided to make a documentary on young bands from Beijing.

A few weeks after returning to Germany I won quite a generous journalism scholarship. I went back to Beijing in the summer of 2004 and started to do my research. I bought all the CDs I could find – which is not a big deal in a country where a CD is less than one pound. I picked some bands I had heard of and some others whose music I found interesting, then I called them and made appointments. I called George and asked him to pack his camera and get on the next flight to Beijing.

When George arrived we had little more than two weeks to shoot, and as we didn't have a script there was no plan that we were going to follow. But we knew what we wanted to know from these bands. We wanted to find out why these young Chinese people were so different from their contemporaries. We wanted to know how they'd managed to escape a society in which everybody seems to be fixated on climbing the social ladder and accumulating wealth. We wanted to know how difficult it is to be different in a country where individualism means something different than anywhere else in the world. We wanted to find out how it is to refuse to work and to consume, and to be creative instead.

When we met the first bands – only some of them were later portrayed in *Beijing Bubbles* – we were astonished at how quickly they were willing to let us into their lives. Often we met them in the early afternoon, then they invited us to their homes, introduced us to their friends or families, went out dining with us and took us to their gigs or to some gigs of other bands they knew. They asked us to meet them again the next afternoon or they called bands we wanted to meet and made appointments for us.

We had the feeling they understood immediately what we wanted from them and who we were. We were 10 years older than them but although George and I have been a couple for years, we haven't married or even started a family until now. We are still enthusiastic about living from day to day and doing jobs that bring a lot of fun but not necessarily a lot of money. The bands and us – we liked each other. We were at eye level. George used to wear a burton during the shoot which said, I was a punk before you, and our protagonists had to laugh about it each time they saw it.

After only three days we knew that we didn't want to make a conventional music documentary about the life of these musicians on stage and back stage. Instead, we wanted to make a documentary about the life of young people in China who are more courageous than others. We didn't only like the passion and humour of these musicians. We weren't just reminded of the times when punk was the big thing in Europe. And we didn't only feel as if punk had led to the other side of the world. We also thought that its pathos, its sacred seriousness and its belated old attitudes were being given a new vision of life in China.

We were deeply touched that it is much braver there to run around with tattoos, with strange, oversized shirts and with a hairstyle that makes no sense to most hard working people. When they told us that they started their days with beer, and that they love to watch TV and just think the whole time, we weren't only amused but awestruck.

China is not only a fast developing society where everybody believes that education is the most important thing, it is also a country in which many people of the older generation were excluded from education for a long time. Many of them are still excluded from social advance. Even today 60 per cent of all Chinese citizens are peasants. When our musicians told us that they just want to sing, drink and fuck we were more than amused, too. China is a country where prudery still reigns, where tradition from Confucius to Mao forbids talking about embarrassing things like sex. When they told us where they grow their hemp we also knew that this was more special in a country where drug users still end up in re-education camps.

When asked what they think about their government, most of our musicians seemed to be bored. Unlike Cui Jian, they don't want to write protest songs any more. Maybe that's because they are not threatened by police crackdowns or other restrictions, but still we thought they were subversive. We found that their behaviour gave us an insight into a country where the government withdraws more and more, and where the economy gets more and more powerful. We found the statements they made by their way of living much more meaningful in today's China than the protest statements of Cui Jian.

Often they live in shabby apartments in the suburbs, far away from glitzy downtown. While drinking alcohol and hanging around, they dreamed of traveling, abroad and seeing cities like London, where punk was invented. And while everybody around us in Beijing seemed busy and breathless, they always had lots of time for us.

Our musicians cannot expect to become famous or rich in the near future. There's only one independent record company, which doesn't treat their artists very well. These musicians don't find a big audience because most Chinese prefer to go to restaurants and KTV-bars after work, and not to rock concerts. This is also the reason why there are only five clubs where the local bands can play, and only 20 bands in Beijing who try to make music for a living.

But still our musicians play on. They have found themselves. Maybe one of the reasons for this is that they often don't have a working class background. Their parents are better educated than the national standard, and support them at least mentally. For these musicians, music doesn't have to be a way to get ahead. But we think they are brave and have an important function.

Like many Chinese poets, artists and philosophers before them, they seem to be more free and bolder than many others. We had the impression that a society like the Chinese needs people like them. Maybe one day they will be asked how things can be slowed down. If that happens, then they might have the chance to become a big and powerful alternative youth movement. It was this hope that gave us the idea to call our documentary *Beijing Bubbles*. For us, this name carried the dreams, the enthusiasm and the vitality of these musicians. But it carried their fragility and insecurity, too. Bubbles are not very stable. They tend to burst. ■

WORDS BY MIKE BRETT

The Japanese leaders might now be able to peer through increasingly large gaps in the crumbling Great Wall, but China is well and truly being swept aside as a global superpower after decades of political turmoil and economic stagnation. What, lighter way to lose the rest of the world you mean business. Ben with a bunch of corporate projects and it's a truly breathtaking combination of ideological will, overwhelming resources and leading financial clout!

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ENGINEER Sir, we really love the whole idea of damming the world's wildest river, but there appear to be more than a million people living in the way.

CHINESE GOVERNMENT Will them to travel

1996-1997: Fine, clay

Anyone were to dismantle the author's instructions behind the world's biggest construction project, the script might be a little longer and more complex than this. Then again, it might not. In the years following the explosion of the New Ganges Dam in 1995, the barrier has proved to be the most stubbornly implemented and controversial engineering project since ER Clarke suggested building a moving dam in his 1940s fantasy novel.

By the time the project costed the \$25 billion (above budget) is spent in 2009, the dam will open the Colorado to faster flow, generating hydroelectric energy equivalent to that produced by 15 nuclear plants (that is, the mother of all power plants).

[illegible]

CITIES OF GOLD

Who are the world's most fertile people? Going by recent history it's the fishermen of China's southern coastal village of Shenzhen. Just over 25 years ago the waters lapped against the shores of this marshy area supported around 30,000 people and their families. Now they are overflowing with the chemical effluent from a staggering metropolis of 13 million people.

Once might suggest this 650-fold increase in numbers has less to do with the local townsmen's sexual potency than the influx of boom created by the Chinese government's decision to designate the city as one of four Special Economic Zones at the start of the 1990s.

In a Schumacher-style Urban as Rural policy, then president of the PRC Deng Xiaoping proclaimed that "to get rich is glorious". With Cultural Revolution China strapping to kickstart its economy, Deng's policy gained a monumental pushback and a beautifully planned building programme which many claim is responsible for establishing one of the world's most dystopian cities – think Willem Kuyves but with even more roadblocks.

Utterly banished, Shenzhen rears 'black drame', traditionally because of the redoubt of waterways crisscrossing the region. Nowadays, soaring levels of pollution and a steady criminal underworld give the name an altogether darker meaning. As the high-rises have shot up from the pavements, so too has the number of penniless migrants desperate to escape China's poverty-stricken countryside for a cheap wage in the city.

Unfortunately, Shenzhen's move towards a market economy has been about as orderly as the receipt of a Merlin Maroon egg. The lure of the city's rapidly acquired wealth has created mass unemployment, appalling labour exploitation, and near-legendary levels of prostitution and crime. Still of the decade was to go as the rising gang who reportedly made off with an escalator from a newly opened Metro station. Given that convicted big snatchers can face the death penalty in Shenzhen, these gangster flicks will surely be climbing the stairway to heaven if caught.

ON TOP OF THE WORLD

Anyone old enough to remember the windy days of a snowed-out rail strike will greatly recall straggle carriages and hawkertrucks of doom from the only outfit left with functioning electric. The Qianhai railway, a product of China's controversial Western Development Strategy, is an absolute bare minimum effort for Government transport policy.

Passengers with tickets for the new 48-hour express train from Beijing to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, will be able to lie back and relax the complimentary oxygen supplies as they glide across hundreds of kilometres of permafrost on the world's highest railway line. As you negotiate the Tanggula Pass (the railway's highest point at 5,072 metres above sea level), just try not to heed the warnings that landslides have been known to explode at this altitude, or that climate change may soon rob the layers of ice currently supporting some of the track foundations.

Given such reservations aside, the Qinghai rail link is undoubtedly one of the engineering wonders of the world. Unfortunately, so one thought to ask the Tibetans whether they actually wanted carriage loads of new visitors passing over (or through) the mountains to say it has. The cross-cultural havoc that can be wreaked by a backpacker littered with a half-drooled Poot and anointer膏 is well documented. More seriously, the predicted influx of ten Chinese immigrants is already causing suspicion among the very few Tibetans willing to host a visitor who are known to happen Beijing's political grip on their barely-acknowledged homeland.

Already has undergone a change. No longer the 'Great Wall' joint, embracing China's central suppression of separatist ideas and deflection of the west of the country. Locals are understandably nervous, thus, about the altitude, altitude, impatience being and the topography offered to visitors arriving from other parts of the Republic.

European mountain holidays by Beijing have already been used to his Chinese citizens into the winds but research-based western presence of the Qinghai. As the only remaining region where an ethnic group subsumes Chinese residents, Tibetans now wish by merging the old backpacker for submarkets waiting to prevent a possibly break up of the Tibetanoid.

TAKE THE WEATHER WITH YOU

Wang the right to host the world's biggest sporting event in 2008 has given them the opportunity to showcase its industrial might on a global stage. Unsurprisingly by the party problems of liberal democracy (the tax payers saying, 'How much?'), every five you whisper a budget projection, the Chinese Olympic Committee has lavished billions of yuan on a modest sport, excitement and a generation of stars which make the new Wembley look like the stadium of your local league hall.

The construction of the Olympic construction project is the Beijing National Stadium, which is designed to resemble the 'Bird's Nest'. The nine woven strands of the stadium's facade allow it to be sculpted naturally, while its elegant polymer panels infuse to make its walls weather-proof should a storm blow in.

But there are few bugs in a winging in spending half a decade and hundreds of millions of dollars on a 'bird's nest' which will only for it to go down during the opening ceremony. Previous organisers have paid this price but to buy out local shareholders' upstart stocks and stretch a limousine over the V's seat. Then again, previous organisers haven't remarked an annual budget of \$50 million for the Beijing Weather Modification Office.

Yes, you guessed it: with less than two years until the Olympic flame is lit, the Chinese state machine is now entering its jurisdiction to the clouds scolding through the sky over Tiananmen Square. By using air-conditioning to fire silver rods into threatening-looking summits, WWMO officials can reduce atmospheric clouds to rain themselves out before they come to hover over Olympic heads. The technology isn't yet perfect, but it has already been used to good effect at the Qinghai Festival in Sichuan (naturally, their hair is just unmanageable when it gets damp). ■

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THOUGH CHINA'S CULTURAL VITALITY HAS STRUGGLED TO KEEP PACE WITH ECONOMIC EXPANSION, THE LAST DECADE HAS SEEN AN EXPLOSION OF INTEREST IN ITS CONTEMPORARY ART. BUT AS WESTERN COLLECTORS FLOOD THE MARKET, ARE THEY DOING MORE HARM THAN GOOD?

Think 'Chinese art' and, chances are, you'll picture ancient artisans in silk robes scriawling on brittle parchment. Or perhaps it conjures images of the Cultural Revolution, grubby propaganda posters with their flame-free workers ploughing fields for the Chairman.

Either way, you need to get with the program: Chinese art has undergone one radical transformation after another since the dark days of the '60s, when art's official function was to serve as a tool of politics; when, as Feng Boqi, curator of the 'China Now' exhibition at Vienna's Ebel Collection of Contemporary Art has it, art "reflected the established model values and exerted a subliminal influence on the people's outlook."

Like everything else in Mao's China, art was a centralized endeavor, rigidly controlled by the government's thought police. Even as Mao's de facto successor, Deng Xiaoping, encouraged a progressive economic policy in the '80s, and artists responded by pushing the boundaries of this tentative liberalism, change was stubbornly resisted by the establishment.

These are the murky roots of contemporary art in China – an avant-garde movement at odds with state-sanctioned ideology, and characterized, again according to Feng Boqi, by a "primitive power of enthusiasm and impulse." Work by the likes of Feng Mengbo and Song Dong, the New Realists and the New Cyriacs, was politically and culturally engaged; it was subversive and unsafe. It was dangerous.

The authorities responded by shutting the artists off from exhibitions and public spaces. Boqi's China Art Gallery was out of bounds. Fine Art, the Chinese Artists' Association president, denied the entire sector. Song Dong's solo exhibition at the Central Academy of Fine Arts was closed after half an hour. Some were arrested.

So avant-garde went underground, but it didn't go away. In the early '90s exhibitions were held in houses, apartments and on university campuses. As travel restrictions were eased new impulses were added by the return of artists from overseas – figures like Ai Weiwei who would brood new life and ideas into Chinese art. Eventually, as the underground scene gathered a momentum of its own and as the government continued to find ways to suppress it, the West began to sit up and take note.

As Feng Boqi points out, it was the authorities – very eager to stamp out avant-garde art that led to its international exposure: "Banned from public exhibitions," he says, "the established to show their works in basements, which made them seem more mysterious. And the more mysterious they seemed the more foreign reporters came, and the more attention it drew from the international media."

But here is where the evolution of Chinese art gets a bit sticky. The optimistic view (think of it as the 'short story') is that Western money and interest boosted the profile of local artists, forced the government to relax its hard-line stance and, in concert with the complicated flux of global economics, benignly patronised a healthy, so, a rocket-powered market for contemporary art. And they all lived happily ever after. ♥

The Wayfarer
Feng Boqi (1992)
© Suzhou East Art Foundation



Zhang Jun
Feng Boqi (1992)
© Zhang Jun

Wang Ruyao
Image of Children No. 17 (2003)
© Wang Ruyao



Guo Hu
Guo Hu (2006)
© Guo Hu

Like most stories, there's some truth in this. As Simon Groom, Head of Exhibitions at Tate Liverpool – whose own show “The Real Thing: Contemporary Art from China”, kicks off at the end of March – points out: “The contemporary art market has gone crazy.” Last February, at an auction of New Realist and New Conceptual work from the mid-’90s in New York, prices went up 10 times over. Two months later at Sotheby’s in Hong Kong, an oil painting by contemporary artist Cheng Lu fetched a record \$3.8 million – four times the estimate.

Greg Gurnes, Professor of Chinese and East Asian Art at London’s School of Oriental and African Studies, puts it succinctly: “What we’re seeing is the normalization of Chinese contemporary art. We’re moving from the phase where contemporary art was seen as Chinese art that just happened to be contemporary, to it being seen as contemporary art that just happens to be Chinese.”

Why now, though? What changed to make Chinese art suddenly not just interesting but desirable? It wasn’t so long ago that Charles Saatchi dismissed the entire country’s output as “toys”. Now, the world’s top gallery is opening its seventh new Chinese pad with an exhibition of Chinese modern art.

In Chinese art on everybody’s lips because the art is cool and good and interesting, or because China itself is suddenly a global hot topic? Is it a case of the emperor’s new clothes? “I think it’s a bit of both,” says Groom. “There’s our fascination with the fact that at any moment China could call in the national debt of America and the whole global capitalist system would collapse. But there’s also a

lot of really attractive new stuff happening there in a way that it couldn’t happen anywhere else.” Stuff that “There are no taboos of the kind that we have here, so the performance art element is really shaking the fact that you can punish human brains and eat bodies.”

But, as both Groom and Professor Gurnes acknowledge, this cosy, colonialist view of Western influence isn’t the whole story. For one thing, it’s been a long, hard path to those auctions in New York and Hong Kong. Exhibitions of Chinese work have been taking place in the West since at least 1990 when Fu Douze curated “China: Dream Four Her” in the southern French province of the Var. More strikingly, before the decade was out Feng Bey and Ai Weiwei would stage a show at the Shanghai Biennial whose title, “Fuck Off (Jiaoogobeng)” showed two fingers to Western art structures.

In this not-so-rosy view of the isolation of Chinese art (the “long” version), Western media, collectors and critics play a far more ambivalent role.

From the outset, Western interpretations of Chinese art were deluged by the contest and discourse of the Cold War. In an unpublished text from 1992, *Response from the Cove – Thoughts from the Beijing East Village Artists*, Kong Bu assembled what amounts to an artist’s manifesto in which he stated: “The artists are interested in their own existential experiences. They place importance on... the specific contexts that their works give rise to, creating only from what their own conditions permit.” In other words, the artists didn’t see themselves as political dissidents – they were individuals grappling with a new sense of self.

Though there’s a political edge to this individualism (it adds with traditional communist collectivism), with the Cold War barely thawed that wasn’t enough for the crowing capitalists. They wanted, perhaps needed, these artists to stand more obviously for “freedom and democracy”, so they began to filter the market-based not just on their tastes but on political preconceptions. The result was that international exhibitors would choose work based on its so-called ideology rather than its artistic merits.

The knock-on effect of this practice was even more problematic, it began to skew the whole art scene away from what the artists wanted towards what international collectors expected. Towards what Professor Gurnes describes as “an accessible fraction of the exotic – stuff that plays on ideas or symbols that are going to ring a bell with audiences in Paris, but which aren’t necessarily meaningful to other Chinese.”

So what is the “truth” of contemporary art in China today? In a way it’s simple: there is no truth, no abstract concept of what it’s like. But both Professor Gurnes and Simon Groom believe that too much of our thinking is rooted in outdated ideas. “There are very few exhibitions that really reflect the kind of art that is being shown in China,” says Groom. “The thing you need to understand,” adds Professor Gurnes, “is that things are moving at such a terrific pace that issues like subjectivity and the role of the individual, which were very meaningful in the ’80s, are just taken for granted now. That stuff’s old-fashioned.”



Chen Peng
Speaking Around (1994)
 © Foundation End Contemporary

For Professor Clunas, the key is variety and competition. For Groom, it's the very speeded up nature of China, and the problems it poses for artists, that makes current work so interesting. "You walk down the streets there and they're putting things up at a pace that you or I or most artists just wouldn't conceive possible," he says. "It must make you feel pretty demoralised, but you're got to continually respond to it." In theory, that means a new generation of young artists more fully and sincerely engaged with the world around them than ever before.

But not everybody is so upbeat. Thomas Roberts owns the Red T Space, a gallery in Beijing's artists' quarter, and her on-the-ground assessment is bleak. "Modern art is becoming less and less creative," she says. "In my opinion, at the moment there is a lack of truly original material and content." Surprisingly, she puts this down to the popularity of the market. Prices are so high and the rewards so great that the temptation for successful artists to repeat themselves is simply too much. One, Yin Jun, bought a house and car off the proceeds of only eight months of sales. "It's easy," says Roberts, "but an increasingly common pattern for young artists with a bit of luck."

Perhaps the final irony is that, just as China gets to grips with the value of its artistic heritage, and offers artists more freedom and opportunity than ever before, many of them are beginning to feel a sense of cultural dislocation. As contemporary art gains overground, and the threat of imprisonment recedes, many of the artists simply don't know what to say. "A lot of artists feel slightly lost," says Groom. "They don't know where the limits are. Often the point of making work was seeing just how close you could come to the edge. But if things aren't getting closed down, what's the point of making work?"

That creativity should suffer at exactly the same time as huge sums of money are thrown around the world's auction rooms shows that, in this respect at least, China's artistic community is probably no different from anywhere else in the world. But for all the problems, that sense of urgency remains. "There's a new generation," says Groom, whose exhibition at the Tate includes 11 brand new pieces, and nothing at all from before 2000, "a new spirit in Chinese art." While that survives there is always hope. Like Mao said, it only takes a single spark to start a prairie fire. ■

All artwork courtesy of

CHINA NOW
 The TATE COLLECTION of Contemporary Art
 (15 August 2006 – 25 February 2007)

THE REAL THING: CONTEMPORARY ART FROM CHINA EXHIBITION
 Tate Liverpool
 (30 March 2007 – 10 June 2007)



Wang Hong
Door (2001)
 © Wang Hong

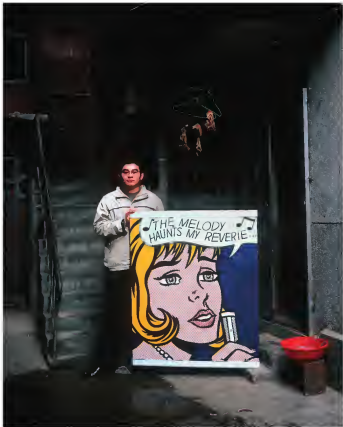


Made in China

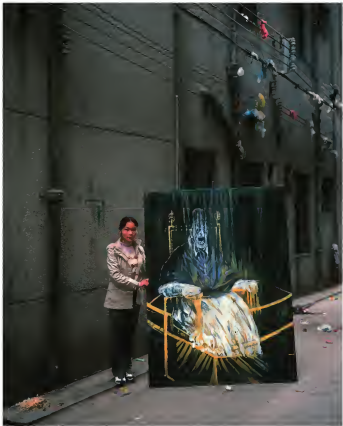
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MICHAEL WOLF

They walk and ask themselves: What is art? In China, government, they ask themselves, government of searching photos, and the

[illegible]











WORDS BY MONISHA RAJESH

THE BRITISH MAY THINK OF THEMSELVES AS THE GUARDIANS OF THE GOOD, HONEST CUPPA, BUT WE'RE TEA-DRINKING ARRIVISTS COMPARED TO THE CHINESE.

The hallowed tradition of tea drinking is synonymous with peace, calm and reflection. But it can also be the unassuming cause of all evil. Take Zhang Yimou's *Curse of the Golden Flower*: Gong Li's Empress Phoenix is having an affair with her husband's son from a previous marriage, causing the cuckolded emperor to reap his own revenge by ordering the court physician to spike her tea with poison. Murder aside, it's a sacrilegious blow to the history of tea, whose cultural significance dates back over 3000 years.

Legend traces the origin of tea to 2737 BC, when Chinese emperor Shen Nong was sitting beneath a tree while his servant boiled drinking water. When leaves blew into the brew, Shen Nong, a renowned herbalist, decided to try the infusion which, conveniently, had come from the camellia species, from which the three basic types of tea – green, black and oolong – all derive.

In Chinese culture, after a feast is filled, the recipient may tap their bent index and middle fingers on the table to express gratitude to the person who served them. It's a custom that originated in the eighteenth century Qing dynasty when Emperor Qianlong, the greatest tea lover of them all, travelled in disguise. His servants were forbidden to reveal his identity, but after receiving a cup of tea from the emperor, one servant bowed himself in a quavering lifeless wish to Apollon but not bend his fingers on the table to express his gratitude to the emperor, without arousing him.

During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), tea parties in the Forbidden City were held in Wenhua Hall – known as the 'Hall of Literary Story' – to honour Confucius. The emperor gave tea to the lecturer and his members so the lecturer could maintain his throat before speaking. The whole ceremony symbolised a furthering of education. Black tea with milk was preferred, with a fixed number of cows providing milk directly to the royal tea kitchen.

Emperor Huzong of the early eleventh century Song dynasty was a tea connoisseur who loved the stuff so much that he took to pouring boiling water over his subjects. Despite being a rubbish mediator of state affairs (he died in prison, a broken man), the emperor's personal tea serving reflected his cultural sensibility, and he would often compete with his subordinates to see who could make the best cup. After his rule, being served tea by the emperor became a rounded honour.

Rumour has it that one of the first teas in China is the ricekney picked Azumayen – an oolong tea that dates to the early eighteenth century in Fujian. Another legend tells of monkeys trained by monks to pick the finest leaves from wild tea trees growing in the Wuyi Mountains to be presented to Emperor Qianlong. ■

Forbidden

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PETERSON

ON THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI'S EPIC THE LAST EMPEROR, JAMES BRAMBLE REVEALS THE INSIDE STORY OF THE GENESIS OF THE FIRST FILM GRANTED ACCESS TO BEIJING'S FORBIDDEN CITY.



THIS YEAR SEES THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RELEASE OF BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI'S THE LAST EMPEROR, RUNNING AT 150 MINUTES IN ITS ORIGINAL VERSION (215 MINUTES IN THE RECENTLY RELEASED DIRECTOR'S CUT), AND COVERING SOME 50 YEARS OF CHINESE HISTORY. IT INVOLVED HUNDREDS OF EXTRAS, LUXURIOUS COSTUMES AND BRILLIANT CINEMATOGRAPHY BY VITTORIO STORARO. IT WAS PERHAPS ONE OF THE LAST GREAT HISTORICAL EPICS OF THE CENTURY.

Despite the film's status as the first feature film to shoot in the Forbidden City—the compound of China's imperial palace in Beijing—said a census of *Golden Age* properties, perhaps the most striking thing about The Last Emperor is not its huge scale, but its subtlety.

Far removed from the narrative certainties of sweeping historical dramas, the film strikes the sensibilities and imaginations of both events and characters. Most notably, the film is highly unusual in negating its principle subject, Emperor Puyi, to a mere agent of historical forces.

It's no coincidence that film is a conjunction of history of which Miho would be proud. Bertolucci is an avowed communist who makes deliberately political, though not polemical, films, films such as *The Conformist*, his 1970 work in which a fascist convert arranges the assassination of a dissident friend, and 1976's *1900*, a drama spanning the first half of the twentieth century in Italy, where communist peasants revolt against the fascist government. As with the work of Visconti and Pasolini, his films fuse the political and the personal.

Such politics presumably did no harm when persuading the Chinese authorities to allow The Last Emperor to be made. Joyce Horkley worked as Associate Producer on the film, and was there on the day to shoot in the Forbidden City came about. "There was a film that had recently been made about the silk roads, and the director—an Italian, I think—had made friends with the Chinese. That was the beginning of being allowed to make The Last Emperor."

Bertolucci offered the Chinese authorities two scripts: one for *The Last Emperor*, drawing its way on *Twilight in the Forbidden City*, the memoirs of Reginald Johnston, Puyi's father; the other an adaptation of Andre Malraux's excellent novel *La Croisière du Hsienwei* (Mists Fall), about the failed communist revolution in 1920s Shanghai.

"I suppose when you look back on it, it wasn't all that hard," says Horkley. "But it was a long process. It took five months, but the Chinese cooperated. On the whole it was a wonderful experience."

It is easy to see why the Chinese government favored The Last Emperor. Puyi is virtually a non-person, a historical construct, emblematic of a regime he found himself in either as ruler or slave. To Qing dynasty China, he was the "Son of Heaven," ruler of 10,000 Years. To the succession of increasingly hostile revolutionaries that seized power from 1911, he was the embodiment of a corrupt and cruel regime.

Biology aside, when asked what the Chinese authorities gained from the film Joyce Horkley's answer is more precise: "Money, plenty of money." That might explain why the shoot progressed without much interference, although Joyce admits, "There was always the feeling of being watched. One Sunday we went out near a little riot and there was a man there in the most amazing dress suit. Hook a picture of him, and soon after I lost my camera. I could be wrong, but I think that's why my camera went missing." But bigger problems were on the way, as Horkley admits: "Tiananmen Square came after, and I think that's when things changed."

One especially poignant scene in the film shows the student protests of 1989, inflamed by the Republic government's corruption and German concessions in China being ceded to Japan by the Treaty of Versailles. In one making of documentary, a Chinese cameraman explores proudly that the protests demolished the students' patriotism and the drawing of "a new awareness—the ideology of a new age." In the film, the students are met by a wall of bricks, their banners faded. The scene of flag-burning is inevitable.

Having been exiled from the Forbidden City in 1924, Puyi became puppet Emperor of the Japanese state of Manchukuo in 1932, and following Japan's defeat in the Second World War, was captured by the Soviets and repatriated to China where he was re-educated under Mao's Cultural Revolution. Intermittent at the time, Bertolucci was at pains to stress that the re-education process undergone by Puyi was "not brainwashing"; that, "they never asked him to be a communist, they just asked him to understand his mistakes."

Bertolucci may have had a number of reasons for representing the episode in a positive light, not least his dependence on Puyi's arguably unreliable memoirs, and his assessment may well have changed in the light of Tiananmen. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the Chinese government would have refused to allow any exposure of the Cultural Revolution.

In fact, under Deng Xiaoping, a critical reappraisal of the Cultural Revolution had been permitted, initiated in the "Spring of the late '70s, that brief period of cultural liberalisation. This is perhaps best evidenced in a scene where Puyi's own prime minister is arrested and humiliated. The role is played by Baosheng Ying—the Chinese Deputy Minister of Culture.

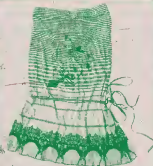
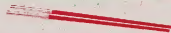
In 1980, while the film was being shot, Peking was gathering force in the Soviet Union, and Deng Xiaoping was instigating a series of moderate economic and political reforms, including the thawing of international relations. Largely as a result of the agreement on the transfer of Hong Kong, the Queen visited China the same year, but was denied access to the Forbidden City as it would have interfered with filming.

Deng Xiaoping even indicated a possible reappraisal of the Maoist Sino-Soviet Split to diplomatic conflict between the PRC and the USSR that led to a schism in international communism, ending the newly elected Gorbachev to visit Beijing in 1989. His visit partly inspired the Tiananmen Square protest, and the brutal suppression that followed effectively ended the brief hope of a new era of peaceful democratisation.

But The Last Emperor remains more than a mere historical drama. It is a rare example of a film that embodies its narrative context in its own backstory. It is a glimpse into both China's distant past, and its recent history, testament to a fleeting moment when walls were falling, and forbidden cities across the world seemed to be opening their doors. ■



CHINA IN 選
YOUR HAND



1. Tiger. 2. Dragon. 3. Phoenix. 4. Unicorn. 5. Qilin. 6. Chinese. 7. Dragon. 8. Phoenix. 9. Unicorn. 10. Qilin. 11. Chinese. 12. Dragon. 13. Phoenix. 14. Unicorn. 15. Qilin. 16. Chinese. 17. Dragon. 18. Phoenix. 19. Unicorn. 20. Qilin. 21. Chinese. 22. Dragon. 23. Phoenix. 24. Unicorn. 25. Qilin. 26. Chinese. 27. Dragon. 28. Phoenix. 29. Unicorn. 30. Qilin. 31. Chinese. 32. Dragon. 33. Phoenix. 34. Unicorn. 35. Qilin. 36. Chinese. 37. Dragon. 38. Phoenix. 39. Unicorn. 40. Qilin. 41. Chinese. 42. Dragon. 43. Phoenix. 44. Unicorn. 45. Qilin. 46. Chinese. 47. Dragon. 48. Phoenix. 49. Unicorn. 50. Qilin. 51. Chinese. 52. Dragon. 53. Phoenix. 54. Unicorn. 55. Qilin. 56. Chinese. 57. Dragon. 58. Phoenix. 59. Unicorn. 60. Qilin. 61. Chinese. 62. Dragon. 63. Phoenix. 64. Unicorn. 65. Qilin. 66. Chinese. 67. Dragon. 68. Phoenix. 69. Unicorn. 70. Qilin. 71. Chinese. 72. Dragon. 73. Phoenix. 74. Unicorn. 75. Qilin. 76. Chinese. 77. Dragon. 78. Phoenix. 79. Unicorn. 80. Qilin. 81. Chinese. 82. Dragon. 83. Phoenix. 84. Unicorn. 85. Qilin. 86. Chinese. 87. Dragon. 88. Phoenix. 89. Unicorn. 90. Qilin. 91. Chinese. 92. Dragon. 93. Phoenix. 94. Unicorn. 95. Qilin. 96. Chinese. 97. Dragon. 98. Phoenix. 99. Unicorn. 100. Qilin.

The East Wind Sighs

Photographer: *Louise Samuelson*
Stylist: *Natalie Fleur*

www.louisesamuelson.com

Model: *Lily of the Valley*

Makeup: *Charles Woodhouse at Michael Johnson using Bobbi Brown*

Hair: *Simon David at Mandy Gaskin for David Woodhouse*

Photo Assistant: *Nick Toms*

Dress: *Armani* | *Milani Laundry*

Photo Studio: *Perseus Studio*



Drawn by **YUKIYUKI KIKUCHI** *YUKIYUKI KIKUCHI*
Fashion Director
Starring with actress **YUKIYUKI KIKUCHI** *YUKIYUKI*
Luna Fung







where they're **STAYING** BEST WESTERN PLUS LAUREL
Phoenix, Arizona
where they're **MOVING** **MOVIE HOTEL**
Phoenix, Arizona

HOLLYWOOD'S DEPICTION OF MARTIAL ARTS IS RARELY CLOSE TO THEIR TRUE FORM. LWLIES DECIDED TO TRACK DOWN FOUR WISE MASTERS TO DISCOVER WHO GETS IT RIGHT, AND WHO SHOULD GET THE CHOP.

WORDS BY NEON KELLY



WUSHU

ANTHONY F. MARTIAL ART

Wushu and Kung Fu are two generic terms that refer to a whole range of Chinese martial arts. As a sport, Wushu may be staged through sparring combat or via a non-contact demonstration of moves and routines. This diversity allows Wushu practitioners to express themselves on a variety of levels.

"It's not an aggressive-looking art," explains Paula Sengupta, one of Calonne's most celebrated women athletes. "It's not about being power or strength. It's about feeling soft over your body, showing confidence when performing. Of all the martial arts, for some reason or another, I think Wushu has to be the highest spiritual performance art."

Last year, at the age of 15, Sengupta took second place in the international Kung Fu tournament, held at the legendary Shaolin Temple in China's Henan province. But if this captures so much of Echo the Dragon style fights to the death, then again:

"The Hollywood portrayal of the Shaolin Temple and all its disciplines is really misleading," says Sengupta. "We are not really captured the fact that it's harder. When you watch it and watch the monks performing, there's nothing form-poseant about it. They come out with their head down, bow, then perform their routine, and that's it. I think in the older generation of this especially, there's a big disconnect with reality, but within the last five years this have started to show the peaceful spirit of when you win and when you lose and Wushu—the Jet Li or Kung Fu, for example."

While Li remains something of an acquired taste to Westerners, Asian audiences are more familiar with the star's commitment to supporting Chinese culture. The 1985 film Shaolin Temple, and its two sequels, are particularly significant in this regard, as Li made these films easily to appeal interest in the Asian landscape, which at the time had fallen into disfavor.

Sengupta believes this commitment has cemented Li's reputation. "He Li has a longstanding background of achievement in the martial arts community, rather than just being a performer or artist. With someone like Jackie Chan, I have respect for him, but he started in Chinese space, so his roots are a bit different. Li started on the Asian Wushu team, and I did have advice of when he was a youth competitor. When he made the transfer to movies, he tried to bring the spirit of Chinese Wushu with him. That's why so many people respect him." ▼

MUAY THAI LITERALLY: THAI BOXING

Master Iwan Lloyd was one of the first people in the UK to learn Muay Thai, studying under Masters Teddy and Woody—the two Thai experts who brought the art to Britain in the 1970s. For over 20 years Lloyd and his associates have taught countless students, combining ancient Thai traditions with the orthodox principles of the modern sport.

Despite clear differences in rules and practices, Sport England and other UK bodies tend to regard Muay Thai and kickboxing as being the same thing. A similar lack of respect is found in the world of film, with Jean-Claude Van Damme's Kickboxer series curiously mixing Muay Thai with elements of Taekwondo and Shokunin Karate. Only in recent years has a more accurate representation emerged, thanks to Tony Jaa and Ong-Bek.

"Ong-Bek covers it all," says Lloyd. "You've got the spiritual side of things. It shows the Buddhism and the heritage there, but then it shows the traditional side of things when he's getting ready for fighting in the ring: he wears long shorts rather than the usual tight ones, and he wears rings around his fists, rather than boxing gloves. They really bring out the traditional values of the sport."

While not quite a "pure" representation—Ong-Bek does make some use of Taekwondo—Lloyd believes the film's attention to detail has helped to introduce Muay Thai culture to people who would otherwise only see the sportier side of the art. "He does all the traditional forms of Muay Thai at the start, and those forms aren't normally taught in gyms. We've had a lot of people sign up off the back of that film. I think any martial arts film will get people into gyms, so any publicity is good."

With regards to older martial arts styles, Lloyd has a clear favourite. "Musa Lee and Enter the Dragon—back in those days he was the man, wasn't he? Because of his flamboyance, and his ability to do so many things different from the norm. I've read articles about when he went over to Thailand and taught a Thai kickboxer, but I've heard that he didn't let us well to be, might have liked. I can't say if it's true or not."

KRAV MAGA LITERALLY: CLOSE COMBAT

This close-combat system rose to prominence in Bratislava during the 1930s, taught to Jewish communities by wrestler and policeman He Lichtenfeld. Today it is the chosen hand-to-hand discipline of Mossad, the famed Israeli intelligence agency, as well as being increasingly popular among Westerners. Krav Maga moves are based upon natural reactions rather than tricky attacks, tests, and tend to be less showy than other forms of self-defence.

"The philosophy of it says that it's not a martial art, it's a pure self-defence system," explains Nick Mason, UK director of the International Krav Maga Federation. "There's no artistic element to it—we don't perform any katas [trained sequences of moves] other than what we use when we don't want it to look bad, as long as it's effective."

The Bourne identity demonstrated Krav Maga's focus on dealing with threats quickly—check the early scene where Matt Damon duels two policemen and uses their belts against them—however, according to Mason, the most accurate portrayal of the system is to be found elsewhere, in a somewhat unlikely star.

"Probably the biggest film in which it's used is Jennifer Lopez's *Enough*. It's pretty good, although there are some small differences with the style of Krav Maga we do, basically because it's been Americanised. The Americans have taken Krav Maga from the source and created a franchise system, pretty much like LA Fitness, so in almost every major city you'll find a Krav Maga training centre. There was definitely a bit of a Hollywood touch to it, but on the whole it was accurate."

Manhandling J-Los vehicles aside, how does Mason find cinema's approach to martial arts?

"With film fights, there's definitely a lot of added drama. If you've ever been out on a Saturday night in a rough area, a normal fight lasts between 10-15 seconds max. Sometimes it can be one punch that ends it all."

So which film does he prefer? "The a lot of a lister—'he got the reality of Krav Maga, so I tend to go for the Counting Tapes-type films for entertainment value. I enjoy the martial arts element, but I don't like the fantasy, flying around in space and all that sort of stuff. It's a bit of escapism for me."

TAEKWONDO LITERALLY: THE WAY OF THE HAND AND FOOT

With its impressive range of aerial kicks and acrobatic skills, Taekwondo is a common ingredient of martial arts cinema. Despite being a distinctly Korean artform, these moves are often used to name up films from other backgrounds—a fact that is rarely acknowledged by filmmakers.

"Tony Jaa—he's more of a Taekwondo man, even though he tries to portray Thai kickboxing," claims Grandmaster Liuh. "His basic forms are Thai, but his jumping and jumping in the air, stuff like that, is pure Taekwondo. In real Muay Thai you just go out to challenge the other guy, there's less of this 'imagined stuff'."

Grandmaster Liuh knows a thing or two about spectacle: he was the first person on earth to achieve a five-point aerial break—a feat that required him to leap into the air and destroy five bits of wood before landing. But aside from the stadiums where kicks like this are performed for films about other martial arts, Liuh believes that he disciplines is represented fairly accurately on screen.

"For films, it has to be exaggerated from an overhead point of view so that it looks beautiful and fantastic. But even though people might take it slightly further, the thought behind it is still there: they fly up in the air and do fast or five kicks, and that is quite achievable with Taekwondo."

What of his favourite moves? "I may be a bit biased here, but on the whole I do tend to find that films produced in the East work best. If they're going to portray a kick, it's going to be a nice kick rather than just looking people down."

And he favourite actors? "One of my seniors, Tim Tiao Lung, did quite a lot of Asian films. He was fantastic, and I'm now trying to collect them all through eBay. Jet Li is a King. I'd say you have very new techniques, I must admit, whereas Jackie Chan always goes for the comedy aspect. They're all got their role in bringing martial arts to the West."

While he is personally dedicated to Taekwondo, Grandmaster Liuh believes that every discipline is worthy of equal respect. "All martial arts are in different parts going to the top of the mountain. Some paths are more flowing, so they take you round and round the mountain, others are more direct. What's important to each individual is that they should do the martial art in terms of focusing their mind and knowing their body." ■

May we have 5 seconds of your time? CobraVision is a contemporary and innovative short film competition, which gives aspiring filmmakers the chance to have their short films showcased during Cobra's sponsorship of iOL, m3 and uOL blockbuster movies. CobraVision is all about unleashing the filmmaking genius in you. This is the first time in British television advertising history that a competition has given avid filmmakers a platform to showcase their own short film on national television. Make it big by making a small. Filmmakers are asked to create a series of 10 x 5-second movies, which are judged every month by a panel of film industry experts. You can even edit your existing films to fit this format. Then you can win great prizes every single month as well as getting your film showcased on TV. The only rule is that you must be as original and creative as possible! On top of monthly prizes there is a total cash fund of over £13,800 up for grabs at the annual CobraVision Awards plus Adobe Video Collections and holidays to India! So what are you waiting for? CobraVision is now open to entries and just think..... you could win great prizes and get your masterpiece shown to millions!



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A L.A. Live review will not be asked and by any perceived rating. Just as movies are about more than the two hours you spend sitting in the cinema, our reviews are a chance to talk about much more than the immediate experience of the film to question. There are many different aspects of the movie-going experience and we will embrace them all.

Anticipation

Ever wished six months for a home office behemoth? Read a book that you loved and nervously watched the adaptation? Been pleasantly surprised by an off-the-radar independent? Anticipation plays a crucial role in your reaction to a movie. Perhaps that's why you don't think it should be discussed and acknowledged as part of the movie-going experience.

Marked out of 5

C T W T F R
 H N E K I E
 H E L L
 P W D W E
 T K I L H
 E I S H S
 R C C T E
 N W U E S
 F S S
 O S T
 U
 R

Enjoyment

All other things aside, how did you feel for about two hours? Were you glued to your seat? Did the film speak to your soul? Was it surprising, disappointing, or just plain boring? Were you even bored?

Marked out of 5

C T W T F R
 H N E K I E
 H E L L
 P W D W E
 T K I L H
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 R C C T E
 N W U E S
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In Retrospect

Great movies live with you; you carry them around wherever you go and the things they say shape the way you see the world. Did this movie take away or misinterpret a moment burned into your retina? Was it a quick fix action flick, good fare on a Sunday afternoon? Or the first day of the rest of your life? Did you have it with a busy wife to fill in love with a passion? Or did that first love fade away like a dream of romance?

Marked out of 5

C T W T F R
 H N E K I E
 H E L L
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 T K I L H
 E I S H S
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THE FOUNTAIN

WRITTEN BY
DARRIN ARONOFSKY
DIRECTED BY
DARRIN ARONOFSKY
CASTING BY
JILL KATZ

CASTING BY
JILL KATZ

Darren Aronofsky's *The Fountain* isn't set to be the year's most divisive film. At least at our office, so anything to go by. Here, our release shimmers with speculation, while our dip and rumour of exploitation. Pick a side.

So much love: The Mayan tell the story of an old man. When he died, his son planted a seed on his grave. The seed became a tree, the tree grew into a forest and blossomed.

and the old man's spirit flew with the birds.

Tom Crea tells a different story. It's written across his body etched in the lines of his face. It's a story of pain and grief. A story he's struggled with for a thousand years.

Darren Aronofsky tells a story in *The Fountain*. A story of love and loss that ripples over space and time. From the ancient temples of Spanish South America, to the cornucopia clouds of the far future. A story that dazzles, bewitches and beguiles.

What are we to make of *The Fountain*? How do you respond to a film of such restless self-doubt that it reaches for the power of spiritual revelation?

The answer, as it happens, is simple. If you're prepared to walk that thin line with *The Fountain*, if you're prepared to let it under your skin, it will break your heart.

However you react to the film's self-doubt, *The Fountain* is an utterly believable journey into one man's pain, anchored by an incredible performance from Hugh Jackman as Tom Crea. While

Aronofsky surrounds him with complexity, Tom is rooted in the simple, endless grief of lost love, as he watches his wife, Izzi (Rachel Weisz), slip through his fingers. His pain is recognizable, agonizing and, supported by Clint Mansell's rousing score, it will leave you gasping for breath.

The film has the beauty of a poem: it's elusive and it can be unforming, but it's earned by those pure waves of emotional energy. It's a delicate, difficult film that paradoxically invites ridicule, but you get the feeling, triumphantly, that

Aronofsky doesn't care.

He's meeting the parameters of science fiction. He's made a film that isn't about genre or precedent. It's about vision, belief and emotion. If anything it echoes Kalinski's 2007, but *The Fountain* is a spaced-out odyssey. Like Kalinski, Aronofsky has created a new cinematic vocabulary, and he's moved beyond the expectations of his fan base. He's putting his out there to change the shape of the landscape for good. Maybe it'll die on its feet. But then death is the road to awe. **Matthew Bailey**

Anticipation: The most highly anticipated film of this magazine's life. **Five**

Enjoyment: An emotional powerhouse that makes you cry and rage, you spent. **Lopez** by **Lopez**. An unparalleled experience. **Five**

In Retrospect: A cinematic masterwork. The best film of Aronofsky's career. **Five**

So much hate: You don't get more over-reaching, visually gorgeous soft-simpler for your money these days. If justice is to be served, *The Fountain*—the hapless new think piece from one-time *schindler* Darren Aronofsky—should sleep out the genre, and the director's career, for good.

The story (the word is used lightly) has been mechanically redefined from a graphic novel penned by Aronofsky, from which original cast members Cole Blencoe and Brad Pitt had the good foresight to run a mile. The director eventually secured the talents of arch-difficult Rachel Weisz and Hugh Jackman for the lead roles of Izzi and Tommy respectively.

As each character (the word is used lightly) falls and rises its further way through a thousand years of history, Jackman decides to take on the cognitive Everest of finding the cure for death by putting pieces of bark on a monkey's brain and smashing up officers, while the terminally ill Weisz decides to wear white bubble hats and write a novel about Mayan history which has the artfully-veiled look of something you'd find on the shelves of Posh Times.

Indeed, artifice looms in every scene, both visually and ideologically, with much of the content (the word is used lightly) obviously gleaned from the Wikipedia entry for 'Mayan death rituals'. More Tony Scott than Steven Spielberg, the film peddles a visually loaded upshot reminiscent of a *Y* magazine cover, with over-the-top, over-composed backdrops shotshorned in to pebble over the numerous logo snafus.

In Requiem for a Dream Aronofsky used visual and aural repetition to enrapture us in the banal rants of an addict. As a testament to the director's lack

of substance, he uses the same device again here, but this time to remind you that thinking his banal ideas have gravitas and credibility. By the third time you've seen Izzi risk Tommy out for a week in the snow, the strain begins to show. By the sixth time, it loses all meaning, the notion of a massive spelling error becoming your only basis for reason.

The last 20 minutes of the movie stolen away anything but already-seen footage, with one of the only new scenes including an unintentionally hilarious piece of auto-reflexion in which Jackman slathers himself in the viscous white fluid contained within the Tree of Life while writhing around on the floor.

As this crude, heartless endeavour chews its own tail, the director, manically searching for closure, overcomplicates matters further by throwing down such nuggets of redundant fortune cookie hippy-speak as, "Death is the road to awe". But is death really the road to awe? In that case, why bother searching for the Tree of Life?

At 85 minutes, *The Fountain* is still 45 minutes too long. Its tedious heavily doing nothing to prevent you from feeling like you've just been watching a lumbering, ill-judged windy project which has all the depth, insight and humour of a multi-million dollar science-fiction with delusions of grandeur. **David Jenkins**

Anticipation: The half-decent film in the can. A third paragraph? **Four**

Enjoyment: An over-ambitious, for all concerned. **One**

In Retrospect: We'll never look at Hollywood again. You, the most desperate of people. **One**





WITNESSING RECOGNISING YOUR EVENTS

ANYTHING
OF
THE
MONTIEL
SHARKEY BOONE
JONATHAN WILKINS
ANTONIO LEAL
MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IN RETROSPECT

Part 1: The Early Years:

Oso (loosely based on writer/director Oso Montiel) is a cocky but confused teenager growing up in Queens, New York. In 1999. And if the past 30 years of stories have taught us anything, it's that life on the streets in NYC is tough.

But *A Guide to Recognising Your Stars* is based on Montiel's actual autobiography, so we're more reason than usual to believe that what we see of young Oso (Shane L'Amour) and his friends — Antonio, Scott, Mike and girlfriend Laurie — is more authentic than most.

So even if *Stars* sounds like another fly-on-the-streets drama, at its core is a deceptively thoughtful look at how different people — family, friends and enemies — shaped one man's life

in adolescence.

Most consequential of all is Oso's relationship with his father (a domestic, Goofy-frentype played by Chazz Palminteri), which is fraught with tension and misunderstanding despite the fact that they clearly love each other, and which ultimately leads to bitterness and alienation.

This relationship, though subordinate to the story of Oso and his friends, is the most compelling part of Montiel's debut. The extent to which it will affect young Oso in his later life becomes apparent in the second half of the film in which —

Part 2: The Later Years:

—we look back. To where he's from. To the melting pot of people, relationships and incidents which

have caused him to become what he is today: a lost child with a deeply ingrained love for his streets, his family, his past and his events.

Montiel's wonder stroke is to lend reality, humanity and credibility to this portion of the film by casting his older self as Robert Downey Jr. We feel his pain at former events, how time changes everything and ultimately how time changes nothing.

He steals his former stomping ground, steals his former friends, reminisces with his mother and tries to heal the rift with his father. Some things change, others don't — Laurie (Rosario Dawson) now has a daughter. She's the same Queens girl, and Oso is the same Queens guy, but this is a different time. When Oso left, he could have married Laurie. Now their

fruition is substantial.

Such carefully scripted and tastefully directed work is a real joy — especially in a debut. Montiel's skill lies in crafting a tangible reality. Whether it's actually his reality we can only guess, but we'd like to think it is. And we'd all like to experience the saintly guidance of friends like Antonio, Laurie and Mike. Jonathan Wilkins & Anton Brance.

Anticipation

Autobiographical debut
epicure self-indulgent
subliminal war? Yes

Enjoyment

Tough
streets — tough love. Yes

In Retrospect

Emerson
saintly recognition. Yes

9TH COMPANY

PRODUCED BY
DITO MONTIEL

DIRECTED BY
DITO MONTIEL
STARRING
Taylor Kitsch, Jason
Momoa, Aaron Eckhart,
Michael Fassbender

Thank you, Hollywood, for apportioning what could have been a seminal war film.

Although ostensibly a genuine portrayal of a forgotten regiment in the Afghanistan conflict, whose journey takes them from dehumanising training to a bloody deus ex machina on an Afghan mountain, *9th Company* borrows a truck load of clichés from benchmark blockbusters like *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket*, rather than fulfilling its own unique potential.

They're all here: the young soldier with a sweetheart waiting for him at home, the sensitive arty type turned killing machine, slow-mo choppers flying through smoke,



and various down-on-bellies, 'Why-oh-why?' moments.

Yet the battle sequences are impressive, and the beauty of the Afghan mountains is readily acknowledged. In fact it's the visual opulence that redeems the film – a powerful and at times poetic landscape, which captures the desperation and isolation of the young soldiers as they fend

off two-and-a-half days of heavy artillery attacks by hundreds of mujahideen and Pakistani mercenaries.

But as with most aspects of *9th Company*, this has been done before, and done better. The film's biggest battle is to stand on its own two feet amid the crowded war movie genre, and just be relevant. **Well done.**

Anticipation. *9th Company* is a real big budget war blockbuster. **For**

Enjoyment. This is *Warrior's* take on *Hollywood*. *Warrior* is just called in his green. **Too**

In Retrospect. Should have been as much more. **Too**

An interview with Dito Montiel, writer and director of *A Guide to Recognising Your Saints*.

LWL: Dito, *Saints* is your first film and it's a major feature – what made you think you could pull it off?

Montiel: It's funny, I remember seeing *City of God*, and after watching it I thought that I'd better not mess this movie up, but I had no money (most people working with me that I wasn't too worried).

LWL: Where did the title come from?

Montiel: I had this book when I was a kid called *The Picture Book of Saints*. I wrote little things in it, and I had a picture of my friend Antonio in it. Another friend said, "If you develop this, it could maybe be a book".

LWL: Chase Palmer is pivotal in the film, how did he come on board?

Montiel: Like, one day Chase called me up and I thought he was wrong, just wrong, but I'm more glad that I was wrong about thinking he was wrong. Every time I have about a break time director and he gets all these people involved. I'm always looking for the punch line, like, what's his last punch?

LWL: What about Robert Downey Jr? How much was he involved in the production?

Montiel: Robert's strange – He leaves me cryptic messages like, "I just saw Antonio, hey and do it backwards", and he sends you into a tailspin. Eventually, I kind of enjoy that. He's really smart.

LWL: You break the fourth wall half way through the film in a way that's completely unexpected. How did you think of that scene?

Montiel: One day chatting [Tina, who plays Antonio] was on set and he said, "What does Antonio think of himself? Does he think that he's the baddest motherfucker to ever walk the street?" I said, "No, he thinks he's a piece of shit. Tell you what, walk down that hill and tell the camera what you think of yourself." I got each of the other guys to do the same thing. I just thought, "Fuck it, we'll put it in the movie, just when the audience thinks that they know who these people are".

LWL: How close to your real-life friends is this story?

Montiel: The real story is a bit more intense and violent than the movie shows. In real life Antonio actually escaped from prison, and he did a lot more things than this film says. Jonathan Writings & Adrian O. Santos

Check out the transcript in all its full, uncut glory at www.thewhitehouse.co.uk.

FACTORY GIRL

DIRECTED BY
Simon
Cox
CASTING
Director: Mark Grogan
Producers: Mark Grogan
Producers: Mark Grogan

THE
FACTORY
GIRL

Hype, gossip and meaningless celebrity made Andy Warhol tick, and so they remain measurable when looking at the man and his muse, Edie Sedgwick.

In fact, co-writer Sierra Miller is the role of the ingenue who became an overnight superstar makes the film so self-referential that Warhol himself would be proud. And though Miller is constantly engaging, is it because this is a great performance, or because she's so talented in our own or liberty culture that she can't be separated from the real Sedgwick?

The problem with *Factory Girl* is that Warhol's moment is gone, and so too is the franchise his work created. We've moved beyond his concept of celebrity, and we're numb to the excesses of fame. As a result, it's difficult not to experience sympathy toward two people who, by their own confession, made movies about "nothing real."

As it happens, the interludes, clips and photos that play out over the end credits will get you closer to Sedgwick than any portrayal of a lost girl with a delusional trust fund. *Anna Cox*

Anticipation: The book gave them enough tabloid fodder for at least six months. But

Enjoyment: Miller has the charisma to pull it off, but it feels muted on this modern morality tale. *Tom*

In Retrospect: There's no real need for *Factory Girl*, just go pick up that copy of *Real Sex*. *Tom*



DREAMGIRLS

DIRECTED BY
Denzel Washington
CASTING
Director: Denzel Washington
Producers: Denzel Washington

THE
DREAMGIRLS

Dreamgirls is a popcorn-topped movie about a group of women at the height of their careers. So we thought we'd find one and ask her what she thought.

Q: Okay, give me, say, five DVDs that are in your collection that show what kind of movies you like.

A: Love Actually, Notting Hill, Bridget Jones, Girl on a Train, You're Not a Man, You're a Donkey.

Q: How *Dreamgirls* came along at the right time? Do you think that girls will embrace it, and it'll fill that box and the City void?

A: I don't think so. Maybe it's just me, because I've never wanted to be a pop star, and maybe those girls who do will like it more. But I didn't watch it and think, I want that life.

Q: Why not?

A: The band had this gift power, but as soon as they hit the big time they just turned their back on their friend. I didn't see the Sex and the City vibe. In *Sex and the City*, they're behind each other the whole way. They went through all these changes together, and they were still friends at the end. *Dreamgirls* doesn't really show that.

Q: Was it obvious that the film was based on a Broadway show?

A: Yeah, I didn't know it was a

musical, but I was thinking that I'd love to see it on the stage. I had that sense of exhilaration at the end, because it was like a performance rather than a film.

Q: What did you make of Beyoncé?

A: I thought she was beautiful.

Q: What about the relationship between Effie (Jennifer Hudson) and Deena (Beyoncé)?

A: I went into the film thinking that Beyoncé was going to be the main star, and I was quite surprised that Jennifer Hudson took on the lead role instead.

Q: Do you think there's an irony there, in that Deena isn't really the star of the band, just like Beyoncé isn't really the star of the film, but she's pushed to the front anyway?

A: Do you think that dynamic makes the film a bit subversive, since?

Q: It's not something I really thought about. I guess so. I can see what you mean once you start thinking about it, but I don't think that's something that people will care about. But it's interesting that someone might be prepared to jeopardize the whole meaning of the film to push Beyoncé into the spotlight, and I don't think it would be the same film if they did that. It'd be a bit lost.

Q: What do you make of the fact that Beyoncé lost weight to do

the role?

A: I think it was my other role that wouldn't have been right because I love her figure, and I love that she's got curves. But Deena Ross is very willowy, and she was just trying to emulate her. So I think it's relevant in this film. They didn't say, "You can't be a movie star unless you lose weight."

Q: What did you take away from the film?

A: When I think about it now, I think about the dresses and the make-up and the hair - that whole '60s feel. I really enjoyed that side of it because I love that era anyway. The dresses that they wore were just beautiful - all shimmery and sparkly, but really womanly as well.

Q: What's holding it back from being a classic girls' film?

A: I think a lot of classic girls' films involve the male lead being somebody that everybody fantasizes and a lot of love scenes. But the love story wasn't really at the forefront. Jamie Foxx wasn't the type of guy that a lot of women are going to fall for. It didn't have Johnny Depp.

Q: Scores?

A: 3.4.3. I really really enjoyed it while I was watching it, but it didn't quite fulfil what I went in expecting it to be.



An interview with Bobcat Goldthwait, director of *Sleeping Dogs*.

LWLies: What on holy events influenced this film?

Goldthwait: A lot of it is an autobiography – my ex blows her dog.

LWLies: How many times have you used that line?

Goldthwait: No, it's the first time. I've been waiting to say that. I usually tell people that my dog's really hot.

LWLies: Isn't your dog called Stephen Baldwin?

Goldthwait: No, I once called him Stephen Baldwin, but I called him William Holden instead. I'm glad I didn't, although my dog is a hetero-gous Christian so it would have made sense – Stephen Baldwin just found Jesus. Apparently he was in Long Island.

LWLies: Jesus?

Goldthwait: Jesus and Stephen Baldwin. That's where they hooked up. Actually, two dudes hit me at the same time; a woman blows her dog, and he takes a film about honesty.

LWLies: Big dog.

Goldthwait: It was a very big dog. I think the kind of influence would be Neil LaBute or something like that and that that's the kind of stuff that interests me. The comedy that comes from being uncomfortable. In *Jesus*, if you want to go and see a comedy you're stuck with broad characterisation – which I'm not going to apologise for considering that's how I made my living in the '80s – or you end up going to an indie comedy and there always wrap up with, "life's fucked, man, why bother?" So I thought it was more subversive to make a comedy aimed at adults with no upbeat ending.

LWLies: What's your take on honesty, because it seems that you're kind of against it.

Goldthwait: I think a lot of sleep is done under the guise of honesty. "I have something hidden, I tell you, now I feel better and you're burdened with all this weird shit."

LWLies: You shot the film in 16 days. How much directing can you do in that time?

Goldthwait: Well, I'm not really a fan of fancy camera moves because they take me out of the movie so I was more concerned with getting the performance down and getting the script shot than I was with creating a piece of art. The only thing you can take credit for is hiring the right people.

LWLies: It's your third film, the first being *Shake the Game*, which Martin Scorsese has hated...

Goldthwait: "THE CLEVER MAN OF DRUNK CLOWN MOVIES" Scorsese was interviewing him about film preservation and they asked him, "Do you want to preserve every film, even *Shake the Game*?" To which he replied, "I love *Shake the Game*." I read that interview about 20 times. My daughter asked me why I kept reading it over and over and I said, "Look, your daddy's never going to win an award. This! This is my award!" Adam Lee Gorbis.

For more in-depth this-wagging, check out www.thewhitehouse.co.uk. H200

SLEEPING DOGS

PRODUCED BY
BOB CAT GOLDTHWAIT
WRITTEN BY
MARTIN SCORSESE
DIRECTED BY
BOB CAT GOLDTHWAIT
CASTING BY
JACQUELINE HARRIS

Available
on DVD

They call it a 'date movie'...

but if you're trying to impress a prospective partner by subjecting them to 90 minutes of some tedious non-com star's weirsome profanity, then you might want to have a good, hard look at your basic social skills. Maybe you're just not ready for that serious commitment yet.

Sleeping Dogs, for its part, seems fully appraised of this state of affairs and at least does its best to find new life in this shallow genre pool.

Wholesome primary school teacher Ary (Melinda Page Hamilton) has put a poetically-friendly past behind her (there's no polite way of putting it: she's gotten out of a dog) and is now getting serious with her study beau (Bryce Johnson).

But, duped by the American fixation with self-regarding narcissism, she reveals this sortle peccat to her other half. The film goes on to explore whether this, or any relationship can withstand the rigours of such full and personal disclosure.

Goldthwait (that crazy dude from *Police Academy*) is as restrained a writer and director as he was a theme performer, guiding his film with disarming sensitivity while coaxing adult performances from a relatively unknown cast. Without any hint of high-mindedness, he is also refreshingly open about which side of the honesty fence he comes down on.

Despite being thin on laughs and light on conventional romance, *Sleeping Dogs* manages to be both wry and witty. It's only a matter of time before it gets tagged as the date movie for people who, quite seriously, don't like date movies. Adam Lee Gorbis

Anticipation: The dog updating Star Trek

Enjoyment: Ah, they doed key. Three

In Retrospect: 16 years date still perform *Failures* to Launch, perhaps at just wasn't meant to be. These



SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

STORY BY
JENNIFER WILSON

WRITTEN BY
LARRY PHILIPS
DIRECTED BY
TODD PHILIPS
CASTING BY
JILL HEDER
COSTUME DESIGNER
JILL HEDER
PRODUCTION DESIGNER
JILL HEDER
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
JILL HEDER
PRODUCED BY
JILL HEDER
SCREENPLAY BY
JILL HEDER
DIRECTED BY
TODD PHILIPS

With *Starsky &*

Walsh and *Road Trip* behind him, director Todd Phillips has taken the lazy-if-logical route in his new film *School for Scoundrels*: he's made a film that is in no way different from anything he has done before, only this time he's put in less effort and cut more corners.

Loosely based on the 1960 Terry-Thomas film of the same name, this time around Billy Bob Thornton is a D.P. teacher of a covert class for losers who want to learn to be cool. Number one loser

is Jon Heder, a maverick who drives around town in an electric golf buggy, issuing threats and getting abused. He's also a "Big Brother" to disadvantaged kids, but even they think he's a nerd, and they're dead on the money.

It's up to Thornton to teach Heder and his lovable band of dweebs to man-up and get laid, but Heder's initial success, with the beautiful Amanda (Jacinda Barrett) makes Thornton jealous, and they both end up competing for the same girl. Heehee! Who will win?

The chief problem with *School for Scoundrels* is that somebody needed to ask it some hard questions, and clearly didn't. Simple things like, "Why has this happened?" "Why does she say that?" "Why does he do that?" And most of all, "What's going on?" The result is a film that doesn't really know what it wants to be and even if it did, it still wouldn't be very good.

Heder's reinvention as a ladies' man isn't convincing, but more unsettling is his over-the-top

of Thornton; his uncharacteristic spiffiness obliterates the last vestiges of sympathy for the character, and the film itself.

Anticipation: *Everybody leaves a secondhand. There*

Enjoyment: *Yikes, make no sense at all. Too*

In Retrospect: *Nobody leaves a secondhand any more. One*



THE GOOD GERMAN

THE GOOD GERMAN

CAST
George Clooney
Matt Beckwith
Lene Bausch
Cate Blanchett

When asked to name

his movie highlights of 2006, *The New Yorker* grinch Anthony Lane pointed to a private screening he'd hosted of the 1980 classic *All About Eve*. "Towards the end," a friend asked, "What happened?" "Well," he replied, explaining the plot. "Yes," his friend insisted. "I mean, what happened to movies?"

They don't make 'em like they used to, right Anthony? Only, they do. In fact, if you're Steven Soderbergh you make 'em exactly like they used to, right down to the vintage lenses and the swivel-cut editing.

So *The Good German* is a relentlessly old-fashioned noir thriller set in post-war Berlin. Is a gimmick? Well, kind of, but with one important qualification—its really pretty good.

George Clooney is Jake Garmus, a world-weary war

correspondent re-assigned to Berlin to cover the Potsdam Peace Conference of 1945. Here, Russia, Britain and the US carved up the spoils of one war while firing the first shots of another.

But when the authorities turn a blind eye after the body of Corporal Tully (Tobey Maguire), a black marketeer who also happens to be involved with Jake's ex-squeeze—the dangerously beautiful Lene Bausch (Cate Blanchett)—turns up in the Russian sector, Garmus uncovers another story altogether: the dirty secrets behind America's plans to win this new, cold war.

The Good German is a technical marvel, visually and thematically resonant of the likes of *Casablanca* and *The Third Man*. All the usual noir clichés are present and served: the tough-talking cynicist (says Tully to a legless Jew, "Everyone in town has a hard

luck story"), the seen-but-not-known barker ("That's Berlin"), and, most of all, the moral uncertainties.

The title itself is a multi-layered reference to the hypocrisy of the occupation. Berlin is a city of good bad guys and bad good guys; the question is not so much who among the Germans deserves to be punished, as who among the victors deserves to choose.

Clooney and Maguire both play aged-up type. Jake Garmus's cocksure confidence is gradually beaten out of him as he follows Lene further and further from the moral high ground. And as the kind of guy who'll tell you how he loves his girl, but let you fuck her for the right price, Maguire couldn't be further away from the "good responsibility of Spiderman."

But it's Blanchett who really impresses. Not just an actress in a '40s costume, she's an expert on

films as earlier are: with a face to rival Bergman and Bette, Soderbergh doesn't film her like gapes in awe.

The old-fashioned ethos does mean some clumsy plotting, and Jake is too often the victim rather than the agent of events, but these don't detract from the fact that *The Good German* is a fine vintage. **Matt Beckwith**

Anticipation. *Casablanca* reborn—Is that necessary? **Three**

Enjoyment. *Has a winning, slightly oddball charm, and Blanchett is (more or less) brilliant.* **Four**

In Retrospect. *Too suspect. It won't be remembered in the same breath as its forebears as years to come.* **Three**

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

DIRECTED BY
Steven Soderbergh
CASTING BY
Scott Greenberg, Angelina
Jolie, Alan Ballman

ROBERT
DE NIRO

In the opening

sequence of *The Good Shepherd*, CIA director Edward Wilson (Matt Damon) rehearses his daily routine. He dresses, catches the bus to work and pushes open the door to his office. As it swings closed behind him, the words "NOT AN EXIT" are plainly visible in the center of the frame.

There can be no more succinct summary of the drama at the heart of Robert De Niro's second directorial outing: once you're part of the Central Intelligence Agency, there's no getting out.

The bungled Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 provides the background to this otherwise fictional account of how the w

orld's most powerful covert intelligence service came into existence. As word gets out that classified information was leaked to the Soviets, De Niro cuts between Wilson's formative years at Yale and his early induction into the Office of Strategic Services in a bid to shed light on the factors which motivate his later-day hunt for the male in the Agency's midst.

Such heavyweight subject matter might begin to pall after nearly three hours were it not for the quality of the film's performances. Despite aging on screen about as convincingly as Peter Pan, Damon brings impressive psychological and

emotional depth to the role of a man who must forever choose between his job and his private life. Starring opposite him,

Angelina Jolie offers a complex and compassionate portrayal of a political wife shocked to her husband's profession.

Throughout the production De Niro pays fastidious attention to period details whilst carefully leaving out the contemporary parallels in Eric Roth's intelligent script. In a cameo role as General Bill Sullivan, he warns the young Wilson that, "It's always in someone's interests to provide fact, real or imagined." The brutal abuse of a suspected Russian double agent is likewise a stark

reminder of how little things have changed in the last 50 years. **Mistress**

Anticipation. De Niro hunk at the helm and a trackload of talent on every department. Let the good times roll. **Four**

Engagement. An immense political drama and wall-to-wall spy thriller rolled into one. **Three**

In Retrospect. As tightly plotted as you couldn't squint an anecdotal walkdown between the narrative threads. **Four**





INLAND EMPIRE

ILLUSTRATED BY
DAVID LYNCH
STARRING
JANE FUND
JAMES DERN
JENNIFER JARVIS
JENNIFER JARVIS

INLAND
EMPIRE

Let's face facts:

David Lynch's films are an acquired taste. For those on the outside, it's hard to see the appeal of his gleefully obscure offerings. Such people are unlikely to be won over by the director's latest—a three-hour anthology of bizarre nightmares, combining all of his familiar obsessions.

There is no single narrative at the heart of *Inland Empire*, instead there are five or six plot threads, tangled up to form a kind of poisonous cinematic candy. Best: The clearest of these strands concerns Hollywood actress Nikki Grace (Liane Dennis), who lands the starring role in *On High in Blue Tomorrow*—a Sirkian melodrama in which she enjoys a flirtatious

relationship with co-star Devon Berk (Justin Theroux). Before long, their on-screen romance leaks into reality, where matters are further complicated by the fact that *Blue Tomorrow* is in fact a remake of a cursed Polish film, which in turn is based upon an ancient folk tale. Interspersed with these tales is the plight of a miserable prostitute, and an eerie sitcom starring anthropomorphic rabbits.

If it sounds bewildering on paper, on screen it's positively terrifying. Viewers who struggled with *Lost Highway* and *Mulholland Drive* should approach this film with care. This time around there is no gentle lead-up to the madness; from the very start we are plunged into the dark—both literally and

metaphorically—with very little in the way of light relief.

The first hour contains a few moments of humor, but after this point the going gets increasingly tough. Lynch's deflection to digital blurring adds a further harsh edge to the abstract scenes of loneliness and stases, while nasty surprises seem to lurk around every corner. Among other things, *Inland Empire* is a powerful reminder that you don't have to understand something to be afraid of it.

Lynch's latest will not appeal to everyone. There's a good chance that even hardcore fans will be put off by the relentless grubbiness, yet on every level this feels like a logical extension of his previous films. From the perverse use of pop

music to the splintered portrayal of women, everything here screams of the director's personal aesthetic. For those who can stomach these hours of insanity this is a rare pleasure: a genuinely disturbing experience. **Mark Killy**

Anticipation: *Horror* *fantasies* suggest a difficult three hours, but Lynch is never dull. **Few**

Enjoyment: It is actually enjoyable? You'll be too scared to be sure. **Few**

In Retrospect: Bizarrely disturbing, yet strangely uplifting. Nothing else like it exists. **Few**

SHUT UP & SING

Directed by
Natalie Meinen

Directed by
Natalie Meinen
Starring
Natalie Meinen
Katie Couric
Katie Couric

The Dixie Chicks are

a three-piece country group — a phenomenon in their native US. Juggling diamond discs (two and counting), babes and international stadium tours, they epitomise the modern American woman, and challenge the stereotypes of their redneck roots.

But in 2003 they committed the ultimate example of show-biz perfidy — the Chicks' lead singer, Natalie Meinen, proclaimed (unwittingly) to the world via a London audience, "Just so you know we've endorsed the President of the United States — Bush Texas".

This three-way comment during the burgeoning Iraq conflict proved more costly than the threesome could imagine: words as catalysts for the fabric of the band were called into question.

Though simple in remit, *Shut Up & Sing* is a well-executed documentary that charts the Chicks' fall from grace — from a Texan DJ's Dixie Chick ban and

public GO crashing to their return to the American media circus.

But however much it captures the essence of the Chicks' beliefs, at its core is one major issue which the film never directly addresses. We live in a world obsessed by celebrity, where every ghostwritten biography is an instant best seller, and every interview is a breathless exclusive. This is a world of stage-managed access and pre-planned controversy, but consistently a simple truth slips through the safety net of public relations: It's these acts and public comments that expose the real power of celebrity, but it's that power that the film fails to explore.

Unplanned and uncensored, for the Dixie Chicks, Meinen's comment had an impact much more telling than any lyrical attack tucked away in the middle of an LP. Yes, they're musicians, not politicians, but they speak to millions of people in a language they understand,

and, what's more, no-one can do anything about it. Nor can you dismiss them lightly. Much like the Nixon Administration lashed out at John Lennon, George W Bush is visibly flustered by the band's comments, recognising, no doubt, the extent of the influence the Dixie Chicks have in their home country — if not on policy then at least on hearts and minds.

Their unity, spirit, determination and continued success are testament to the kind of girl power Push and co. only dreamed of. Directors Barbara Kopple and Geoff Peck might have delved deeper into the political

implications of Meinen's comments and the power of popular culture, but *Shut Up & Sing* is a fine example of the truth behind the First Amendment — you can say what you want, but be prepared for the consequences. **Audience Verdict:**

Anticipation... **Black**
licks: **Two**

Enjoyment... **More Good**
From Than The Space
buffs: **Three**

In Retrospect...
Powerful voices are
voices of power: **Three**

ORCHESTRA SEATS

Directed by
Danièle Thompson
Starring
Catherine Frot
Jacques Villeret
Catherine Frot

Directed by
Danièle Thompson

Danièle Thompson's

Orchestra Seats is the charming if slightly naïf story of Jacques, a modern-day Mary Poppins, who blows into Paris on a cloud of fairy dust to convince his photogenically depressed inhabitants that, really, life isn't that bad even if you are rich and famous.

These inhabitants include soap star Catherine, piano virtuoso Jean-François, runaway sage Jacques and his son Frédéric. All of these high-fiving hard-rock cases will have their lives — and in some cases other bits — touched by Jacques, whose homespun wisdom is just the cure for these disaffected urban dwellers.

Though it references some cultural heavyweights, at best *Orchestra Seats* is an *Amélie* done without the visual fire, at worst, it indulges in shameless emotional string pulling.

Furthermore, Paris itself is shot with surprisingly little charm. Even so, it's sweet that it tries this hard to jinx. **Audience Verdict:**

Anticipation... **Force In**
spring Line: **Three**

Enjoyment... **Amazing but**
Screenable: **Three**

In Retrospect... **Charming**
Buff: **Two**



CLIMATES

WRITTEN BY
JENNIFER LEE
EDITED BY
JENNIFER LEE
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY
JENNIFER LEE

THE
CLIMATES
JENNIFER LEE

"In the quest for the melancholic soul of his native city, he has discovered new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures." This is how the Swedish academy described Turkish author Orhan Pamuk when he won the Nobel Prize for Literature at the end of last year, but it applies equally to his compatriot, Nuri Bilge Ceylan.

In his last film, *Uzak*, the director painted a stunning portrait of loneliness and male friendship. Now, in *Climates*, he turns his photographer's sensibility to the ground between men and women, to discomforting effect.

A university professor, Ismail played by Ceylan himself, decides to split from his younger girlfriend Bahar (Ceylan's real-life wife Ebru), while on holiday. Adrift on his return to Istanbul, he has a violent sexual encounter with an ex before deciding to go to Turkey's snowbound eastern region, where Bahar is working in order to visit her back.

Though Ceylan draws heavily on Pamuk's *Snow*, in which an estranged poet travels to northeastern Turkey to woo an old flame in a town smothered by a blizzard, the

snow in *Climates* seems barely colder and more isolating. While *Uzak* was contemplative, *Climates* is unsettling and pessimistic, wrong-footing the viewer with deceptive shots and edits.

Both Nobel-winning author and Cannes-garlanded filmmaker agree that snow is miraculously beautiful. Ceylan is as unerring in the manner he captures its texture and wonder as he is on the psychology of our adult relationships. And who's to say that while Pamuk, a prominent critic of the Armenian genocide, is more outspoken in his politics, in his own way, Ceylan is not making as big a point. **Jenna Mitt**

Anticipation: The western director's previous film, *Uzak*, earned audiences at Cannes in 2000: **Four**

Enjoyment: The runtime may be long, but Ceylan's artwork is up there at levels beautiful: **Four**

In Retrospect: Was any other filmmaker if they don't head the film's language: **Four**

An interview with Nuri Bilge Ceylan, writer-director-star of *Climates*.

LWL: In your latest film there is a shift in the focus of relationships, though it still feels as if you're examining similar themes as *Uzak*.

Ceylan: *Uzak* was between two men, this is between a woman and a man. I have many representations of both types of relationship, so I had very painful memories from when I was younger. If you have painful memories you want to make a film out of that, generally, if you are a filmmaker.

LWL: It almost felt like a genre film, a thriller.

Ceylan: Really? When I do films I never start from a theory. I can change the film at every step during the shooting, during the editing. The most difficult thing for me is to be sure about something during the shooting—when I shoot something I shoot just the opposite as well. If the camera is crying I shoot just laughing; only at the editing can I understand which one fits better for a certain place. I just try to be realistic, at the end I have only one guide, it's my soul, nothing else.



LWL: Have you ever thought about filming something written by somebody else?

Ceylan: I would like to make adaptations, but it's not easy, sometimes writing yourself is easier. You think adapting something will be easier—I have many novels or stories that I like—but sometimes when you begin to work on it, it turns out to be more difficult. I couldn't make an adaptation yet but I want to do it some day.

LWL: You started out as a photographer; do you continue to take photographs?

Ceylan: I like working in photography these days, it's more pure. In the purest and most innocent way, you just work for art like you are a child. Nobody is expecting anything from you so I feel very happy working on my photographs. I try to make my film look like photography as much as possible—in terms of production style, not the result—I don't like too many people around, during the shoot you must keep yourself solitary as much as possible. To think better, it's more alone, more pure. On this film, I worked with 12, 14 people because of new [HD] technology, and I was sitting—at one time much, I think I will make it smaller again. **Jenna Mitt**



design by W. Lohse



CATCH A FIRE

THE
MOVIE

DIRECTED BY
TIM ROBBINS
STARRING
DEREK LUKE
TIM ROBBINS
JAMES WOOD

The true story of

Patrick Chemsuso is the stuff of script-writing dreams. Arrested by anti-terrorist officer Nic Vos (Tim Robbins), Patrick (Derek Luke) is radicalised by the torture and cruelty he experiences in prison. On his release, he leaves his wife and child to travel to Mozambique to the camp of Spear of the Nation, the military wing of the ANC. From here he undertakes a bombing mission against the oil refinery where he used to work that would become one of the most symbolic and strategic defeats suffered by the white government.

Catch A Fire couldn't have come at a better time: in its evocation of the slippery dynamics

of terrorism, it has a lot to say about the current chaos in the world. It's a shame, then, that Phillip Noyce has made a cat-and-mouse movie that's almost completely inert.

He's not helped by Shawn Slovic, real-life daughter of Joe Slovic, who trained Chemsuso in Mozambique. Her script, written in the spirit of reconciliation that admirably characterises South Africa's attitude to its past, is so hell-bent on trading both sides fairly that it sabotages much of the story's dramatic potential, while capitulating to a series of hoaxing clichés.

Nic, you see, is basically a good guy – he doesn't like torturing people, it's just that there's a

communist threat out there, and if there's one thing Nic hates more than Africans, it's those laousy commies. And yet, he is the bad guy, so Tim Robbins substitutes fiery conviction for a guilty self-regard, a decision that does him no favours at all.

Remarkably, Chemsuso is almost more unsympathetic, only landing in jail in the first place because he wouldn't admit that he was having an affair (although, in his defence, his wife is revealed to be a brazen bitch of epic proportions).

Which is a shame, because Noyce tells the photography of the South African wild; a great gulp of *Expensive* filmmaking that

contrasts quite starkly with the tight close-ups of prisons and police offices. But really, *Catch A Fire* fails to do exactly that, which, above all, is the real crime. **MIB Boudreau**

Anticipation – A really made action thriller with lots to say about the politics of terror. **Three**

Enjoyment – Should you feel guilty for not enjoying it more? **Two**

In Retrospect – Too many genre mechanics, and lacks the mechanics needed to tell the story. **Two**

FREEDOM WRITERS

PG-13
Some Drug Use

WRITTEN BY
LANCE
LORD
STARRING
Harry Ginn
Harris, Campbell
Scott, others

"As I walk through the valley of the shadow of death..." Scene 4, from the moment Erin Gruwell (Haley Joel Osment) walks in to the classroom, you're already envisioning Isabelle Pfeiffer in a short skirt.

Freedom Writers starts off on very familiar ground — idealistic teacher brings underdog enthusiasm to a group of aggressive teens — but for a film built around meeting challenges, the audience gets the toughest test of all: understanding the Hollywood cheese.

But despite the high cliché count, the strangest and most

unexpected test comes at the end of the film — emerging, dry-eyed. You know you want to hate it, but you can't. It's well made, the soundtrack is powerful but not overbearing, and the acting is strong throughout. From Osment and Gibson to the less experienced

youngsters. So yes, you'll laugh and cry, but you'll deny it the second you step back into daylight. **Gettin' real.**

Anticipation: If anyone can move A's, B's to D+ — but she's got her work

out out. **Two**

Enjoyment: You'll be embarrassed, mad, happy then educated. **Three**

In Retrospect: The old ideas work just fine. **Three**



NOTES ON A SCANDAL

WRITTEN BY
Barbara J. Green
STARRING
Judi Dench
and Colin Firth

PG-13
Some Alcohol

When boba bombshell Shelia Hart (Colin Firth) becomes art teacher at St. George's School, her magnetic attitude not just the boys in the schoolyard, but even the staff who come into contact with her.

But Shelia is stuck in a lonely rut. Struggling to reconcile life as she dreams it and life as it is, she strikes up a friendship with curmudgeonly Barbara (Judi Dench) — an equally lonely colleague who feels she's finally found her soulmate — and starts an affair with a student.

If this seems like the more dangerous relationship, then Shelia is soon disabused. While she rebels her dreams, Barbara — a crypto lesbian and certifiable nuptio — documents the affair in



her diary, becoming the keeper of the secret. Barbara realizes she has everything to gain by doing nothing, drawing Shelia deeper and deeper into her sappy bosom, while lying further and further into an abyss of delusion. Shelia needs to wake up and smell the restraining order or she stands to lose everything.

Despite a threatening premise that offers little hope of humor, Dench's stoic uncover is outstandingly funny. Political correctness is obliterated by her cut, dry speech, in which the likes of Down's Syndrome children become "coast jokers." It offers a wonderfully unexpected edge to a glibly film. **Wanda's up.**

Anticipation: Gargak-muscling audi. **Two**

Enjoyment: Cerebral knots of shocked laughter. **Four**

In Retrospect: Blushes as just way too cool for school. **Four**

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

WRITTEN BY
Colin, Chris Cottam,
& LARRY
Jesse Green, Tony
Russell, Darren Rock

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

The Brit gangster

Rock gets a David Lauder
photographer Rankin and fellow
feature writer Chris Cottam

When a first child bestowed
with angelic powers descends upon
London's criminal underworld and
begins killing in longways while
making dreams come true, you know
you've landed that great daydream
of a genre, magical realism.

Financed by über-cool
clothing brand Mielie's Pot, *The
Lives of the Saints* tells to escape
its fashion-conscious financial
rears, choosing aesthetics over
substance every time. And while
Tony Green's screenplay is a
welcome twist to the usual rockney
spiel, narrative holes, flat acting

and a melting pot of artistic devices
makes for a real magical realism.

After all, aspirations to
Shakespearean dialogue,
Baudelairean characterization and Blue
Lutheran visuals do not a coherent
film make. *Quoted and confused?*
Unfortunately, yes. Andrew Kuttel

Anticipation: Fashion,
magic and rock stars?
How's that gonna work,
manually? Two

Enjoyment: Solid star for
artistic merit, but answer
no then who the hell is
that kid? Two

In Retrospect: The key
is clearly an angel. Two

An interview with Rankin and Chris Cottam, directors of *Lives of the Saints*.

LIVELINE: Having worked together directing commercials, how did you find the leap to filmmaking?

Rankin: It's huge. Longtime-ago, you're creating 30 seconds, rather than 30 minutes. But you get two or three days to do a 30 second ad, while in a feature film you have to do five or six minutes a day. Every detail of the film has to be discussed, you don't just get the camera and push. You're got to discuss the lighting, the background, the lighting, the tone, the acting.

Cottam: You have to do that with a commercial, but that's, say, half a page of thoughts. To then have 127 pages is an enormous task.

LIVELINE: Does the collaborative relationship elevate some of that pressure?

Cottam: If you direct on your own, you're the one person that everyone is coming to. We had one another to throw ideas at.

Rankin: But you can never alleviate the pressure completely, because you want it to be perfect. Filmmaking is as selfless as it can get in as many different ways — it's scary. For example, at one time someone once people felt that 30 minutes should be cut. We made a conscious decision not to listen to them — for us, the only reason to cut 15 minutes from a film is because the audience need to be in and out faster without having to think about it. But we made a film that's supposed to make you think.

LIVELINE: Were there any points where either of you felt that you had to compromise?

Rankin: It never felt like compromise, it felt like negotiating the relationship. We did have a rule that if one of us wanted to do something more than the other, then they would take the lead, and it worked.

LIVELINE: From the director's chair, was there a division of labour on set?

Rankin: Not really — maybe I would sit back and watch, while Chris was more involved with the actors.

Cottam: The key is not to confuse people. I was always aware that we were our minds up together before we went out with what we were.

LIVELINE: What lessons have you taken from your experience as first-time feature directors?

Cottam: As much as there is a great learning curve, you also learn that there's a lot you still don't know.

Rankin: There's a quote: "What's worse than working with a first-time director? Working with a second-time director, because they think they know it all."

LIVELINE: How about working with two second-time directors?

Rankin: That's even worse — Andrew Kuttel





BAMAKO

DIRECTED BY
JOSSEPHINE A. BAKO
STARRING Aïme Mogo
Moukoko Bako, Dany
Djolo, Idriss Lomax

AFRICANA
CINEMA

It's a rarity for African

films to wash up in British cinemas, but if *Bamako*, the culturally and politically enriching new film from Malien-based director Abderrahmane Sissako, is any measure of quality, then the medium is headed towards a fruitful and diverse future.

Plotting great United Nations-style anti-capitalist polemics, *Bamako* dwells between the daily routines that occur in a Malien courtyard while a trial takes place which pits the people of Africa against the World Bank, the IMF and the G8, all of whom are accused of foul play on a grand scale.

As allegations of corruption and misadministration swirl, Sissako

between various local experts and the representatives of these bodies, we are swept up in an enlivened and sometimes surreal conflict which highlights the societal inequalities caused by unchecked globalisation.

The cinematic element to the film is supplied by the incessant patter of daily life. The trial is regularly disrupted by the impetuous ranting of a prisoner, the squinting shoes of an infant, the meekness veiling of a village elder, or the dissolution of a relationship between a bar singer and her penniless boyfriend. Of the numerous digressions that occur, perhaps the most peculiar is a libelous Western entitled

Death in Timbuktu which stars (amongst others) Denny Glover and local director Ili Balamien as bedraggled gunslingers.

The fact that this important tribunal is occurring in a dusty courtyard is never fully explained, but it is perhaps symbolic of the disparities that Western-backed privatisation has created in Africa. In fact, *Bamako* thrives on juxtaposing the extraordinary with the mundane: the sick lie among the healthy, packed trains arrive through expenses of raffishness and unemployed locals brush shoulders with politicians and diplomats.

The debate itself acts as the spine of the film, and while the

rhétoric remains unapologetically diffuse, it is just about accessible enough to allow novices in the field of global economics to at least head water. Sure, it's sometimes a bit heavy going, but the rewards to be reaped from this original and thought-provoking piece of cinema are plentiful. **Dave Kewin**

Anticipation: A **small** Africa? **World Bank?** A **hard** sell and then some. **Two**

Enjoyment: **Time**, **patience** and an open mind are all that is required. **Three**

In Retrospect: A **raw** original. **Four**



THE ILLUSIONIST

CAST MEMBERS
Edward Norton
Jessica Biel
Paul Giamatti
Michael Kelly

CRITIC'S
CHOICE

Eisenheim (Edward Norton)

is the mystical turn-of-the-century illusionist who falls in love with the beautiful Sophie (Jessica Biel), a woman far above his social standing in the static Viennese hierarchy. These childhood sweethearts are parted when Eisenheim is unable to fulfill Sophie's plea to "make them all disappear", and as a result he begins a journey into adulthood that sees him acquire mystical conjuring powers above and beyond those of your average children's entertainer.

Back in Vienna the two, now adults, share a chance encounter where Eisenheim learns that Sophie is engaged to the dastardly Crown Prince Leopold (Rufus Sewall). After Eisenheim publicly humiliates Leopold, the Prince demands that the illusionist be thrown in jail. Thus begins Eisenheim's quest to win back the love of his life from the clutches of her evil fiancé.

Theatricality Sophie does not take long to get over the "will shaven"; she recognises the adult Eisenheim's dilemma as, despite the addition of facial hair, he looks strikingly similar and, moreover, surely one can only fell ready in love with a man of mystical powers

once? This means that the film actually gets on with its dearest storyline and there are enough plot twists and mysteries to keep you guessing.

However, it's the performances that truly convince. Norton, as the quiet and reserved Eisenheim, keeps things believable. But the film really belongs to Paul Giamatti as Chief Inspector Uhl, a man torn between his duties to Leopold and his own child-like curiosity towards Eisenheim's work.

Depending on whether you're a hardened cynic or hopeful romantic, the film's finale may or may not slightly disappoint. Yet even for those who can see the plot twist looming like a mine on the horizon, *The Illusionist* returns just enough mystery to keep you believing in movie magic. **A-+ Cine**

Anticipation: Doesa, Edward Norton and rabbits in hats. **Three**

Enjoyment: Keeps you vaguely approaching the edge of your seat. **Three**

In Retrospect: A nice reminder that, on the big screen, anything is possible. **Three**

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

RENTED BY Christopher Guest's *Best in Show*, featuring O'Hart, Ed Begley Jr., Catherine O'Hara

CRITIC'S
CHOICE

Is Hollywood beyond

parody? After all, Hollywood has Tom Cruise and when reality itself is a cosmic joke, all the best punchlines are usually taken.

But Christopher Guest has us on his sleeve. For *Your Consideration* is set in the annual carnival of degradation that is Tinseltown's awards season, where Oscar-buzzed family drama *Rose* For Furtor, is threatening to become a breakout success.

That's the call for his troupe of actors – among them ageing beauty Marilyn Hask (Catherine O'Hart) and has-been veterans Sandy Lane (Ed Begley Jr.) – to suffer like rodents in a cage, in this exquisitely painful circus of

satire and failure.

Though there are no depths of self-promotion to which these actors won't sink (including Marilyn's hideously botched below) there is a degree of sympathy in the way they're led like cannon fodder by agents and publicists and studio bosses. If nothing else says Guest, at least actors are creative – and if they're allowed to live in this weird bubble of quasi-emotional innocence, is that really their fault?

Well, yes, might be the answer, but that would only distract from the film's real target – entertainment journalists. Here is safer and satirically richer ground. Where actors are well-meaning dupes



trained like dogs to sit up and beg for love, jannies are the bane on the brink of the industry — corrupt and complicit and dependent on people who, you suspect, they loathe only a little bit less than themselves. This is *Guest* at his most vicious, but also his most visually subtle, skewering the pomposity of *Inside the Actors Studio* or the absurdity of *El* in a haircut or a single uncomfortable silence.

These are the moments when *For Your Consideration* is jolted out of its all-too-comfortable air of lightly amused midlife taking. Elsewhere it feels too much like an insiders' club: like *Guest* didn't really have the stomach to go for

the throat. As such it lacks the operatic bathos of *Spinal Tap*, or even the quiet intelligence of *A Mighty Wind*. Despite the odd good gag and basic worthiness, *For Your Consideration* isn't quite a contender. **Matt Bennett**

Anticipation: *Spinal Tap* goes Hollywood. **Time**

Enjoyment: Incredibly funny, but lacks the teeth to truly amuse. **Time**

In Retrospect: Turns on like *TV Land* — it's all there, and it's funnier and scarier and more messed up. **Time**



WELCOME TO DONGMAKGOL

Not a
comedy

What if you
were born in
North Korea
(Lee Jeong-yeon)
You grow up
knowing about
the war zone



In the midst of the

Korean War, ignorance is a blissful mountain village called Dongmaggol. Cocooned by their naivety, the villagers offer refuge to a stereotypical hodgepodge of North Korean soldiers, having unwittingly welcomed a pair from the warring South, as well as an American pilot stranded by a plane crash.

As the charged tensions build to an inevitable standoff, the villagers' guileless benevolence becomes the heart of Dongmaggol's war-a-hell love-in indifferent to the fear of a gun, hatred of a uniform or the religiousness of arbitrary ideology. Their innocent nonchalance offers a comical, yet powerful reminder of the absurdity of war.

Kwang-Hyun Park has created a magical moral tale loaded with an ethereal, emotional aura. Originally written for the stage, *Dongmaggol* possesses a theatrical edge edge, while a touch of realism imbues each character with depth and complexity.

Local baby-child Yeon-il (Jye-yeong Kang) is an effortless

watch, and reveals Commander Lee (Jae-yeong Jeong) and Lieutenant Pyo (Hee-yeon Shin) carry the weight of the film's message with ease. Even over-inflated stereotypes (fit medic, Moon, and the mother of all American imperialists) are easily forgiven.

With the aid of a fast-paced score and a nod to all things CGI, *Dongmaggol* is a visually captivating affair. Hard-line cynics apart, you'll be bewitched by the stunning opening (a falsetto Shwachnik overhead zoom-out) lulled by the tender flutter of butterflies and blown away by the operatic finale. **Anne Kattun**

Anticipation: A South Korean feel-good anti-war film. **Time**

Enjoyment: If this is Korea, you'll want to live.

In Retrospect: There's a lingering warmth to this simple moral fable, but it won't change anybody's life. **Time**



LW Lies talks to one of the stars of *Fast Food Nation's* ensemble cast, Colombian actress Catalina Sandino Moreno.

LW Lies: Is this an important film right now, given the prominence of fast food in the West?

Moreno: There are things that are happening, and people are aware about them. But in the end, it's their choice whether they're going to eat well or not. I also understand that people don't have time sometimes. They're in a hurry and they just need to fill their stomachs.

LW Lies: Is that true for Colombians too?

Moreno: In Colombia we have time to eat—I have breakfast, I have lunch and I have dinner. I have to have those meals—I have to sit down and make time for it. In the morning, I wake up 40 minutes before I need to go to work so I can eat down and have enough time to eat breakfast.

LW Lies: Do you find it hard to live that way in New York?

Moreno: I grew up in Colombia eating that way, and living in the States is not going to change that. It's something I don't want to lose.

LW Lies: Speaking of Colombia, do you go back much?

Moreno: I try to go as much as I can. I was shooting love in the Time of Chetura recently so I was down there for one and a half weeks.

LW Lies: It must have been incredible to do the film of a Gabriel García Márquez novel in your home country. Have you read much of his stuff?

Moreno: In Colombia it's a mark—I read a lot of Márquez in an collage. Going back home to work on love in the Time of Chetura was a dream come true. He shot in Cartagena—it's a magical, beautiful place. It'll capture the mood of the book and give a lot of authenticity to the film.

LW Lies: What's your take on the rise of Latin American cinema with guys like Cuarón and Iñárritu becoming big names in Hollywood?

Moreno: We have amazing filmmakers. Mónica Beltrán, of course, is just a genius. And in Colombia there's a law now that helps companies make films. There are so many amazing stories that people don't know about, and people just need the money to make them.

LW Lies: How do you find Colombia these days? Are you hopeful about its future?

Moreno: I don't know. I was there for a month and a half. You go back and you look at it with a different eye. I'd love to do something to help. I realize that there are big issues, and that the country needs to change.

LW Lies: For example?

Moreno: Poverty. I was poverty when I was there last time. When you're in Colombia you're so disconnected—you just hear that 600 people get killed but you don't see how awful the situation actually is.

LW Lies: How come?

Moreno: Unfortunately, when you live there you just get used to it. You just get used to it and don't see it. **Vince Melillo**

THE BRIDGE

Colombian
Moreno

Directed by
Jonas
Aker

The Golden Gate

Bridge is many things to many people. Including the site of more suicides than anywhere else in the world. So, inspired by an article in the *New Yorker*, first-time director Eric Steel and his camera crew up at the start of 2004 and filmed the bridge in almost every daylight hour, capturing most of the year's 24 deaths.

It begins with grim anticipation. Steel leases his audience with tantalizing shots of black-coated Goths and moonfall lovers gazing at the water below. An incongruous fat man in a poggie suit approaches, flings one leg over the railing, profiles onto the ledge below, and ingloriously wedgies off the edge to his death.

But *The Bridge* is no queasy snuff movie. Steel recorded over 100 hours of interviews with friends, families and survivors, and as each is allowed to say their piece, the everyday human fallibility glimpsed in that first jumper is painfully revealed.

While the footage shows figures hurling themselves to their deaths, it's the interviews that tell the compelling stories of people who endured severe illness and drugs, and couldn't co-exist with the people who loved them.

As you enter the minds of the victims of each suicide, the

story that the bridge held for them becomes clear. Lingering shots show the dirty red towers against piercing blue skies or projecting from thick fog, symbolizing in its iconic beauty the strength, romance and unity that the 24 jumpers failed to find in their own tumultuous lives.

This is a strangely moving film, calm and steady in its objective distance, until one jump is filmed hand-held. Then it explodes into life in the giddy jittery madness of 9/11. It's this moment, perhaps more than any other, that Steel deystilizes this dark and taboo subject, making it personal and human and compellingly tragic.

And yet the results fascinate rather than horrify. *The Bridge* is a unique piece of cinema, which, in its rigor and empathy, helps us understand how people can be driven to the ultimate act of self-harm. **Steve Watson**

Participation: Do you want to see a snuff film? **Actually:** Yes

Enjoyment: Engaging and original. **Three**

In Retrospect: A documentary that sheds new light on a dark subject. **Four**



FAST FOOD NATION

Directed by
Richard Linklater
Starring
Greg Kinnear, Graham
Greene, Richard
Linklater, Emily
Johnson

By David
Karger

In 2001, Eric Schlosser put the Big Mac under the microscope. Inside, quite apart from the cow factor, he discovered the rise of mega-corporate, super-consumer American capitalism. That's a neat trick, but on the movie version of Schlosser's book, *Fast Food Nation*, repeat it?

Well, kind of. Director Richard Linklater has decided to forego a documentary in favor of a fictionalized narrative centered on the made-up Mickey's burger joint he joins PR man Don Henderson (Greg Kinnear) as he travels to small-town Colorado to investigate the Unglobe Meat Picking plant, where "The Big One" patties are

made. Meanwhile, a group of Mexican diegals are smuggled over the border and put to work. And nearby, Colorado teenager Amber (Ashley Johnson), a Mickey's burger-flipper, starts to wonder about her employer.

There are big risks in this ensemble format, namely that the end result has none of the potent force of documentary, and little of the dramatic verve of cinema. While Linklater doesn't fall lock stock into that trap, there's something odd about watching a fictional movie in which the narrative message is so overt: Okay, fast food is bad, but a film that's this programmatic isn't

much more nourishing than, well, a "Big One."

There's a telling symptom of that problem, and it arrives in the form of Bruce Willis' brilliant cameo as Harry Rydell, the Mickey's meat buyer who has been turning a blind eye to Unglobe's contaminated meat and diegal workers for years. In a two-handed scene with Henderson, Rydell is allowed to argue back, "Fast food tastes great," he says, and if you're afraid of fly-belly germs, all you have to do is cook it properly. It's an electric monologue, and for a moment *Fast Food Nation* properly comes to life. You see, it can entertain, and it can persuade, but

it can't quite do both at the same time. **David Karger**

Anticipation It's not a documentary? Could be terrible. **Yes**

Enjoyment Fascinating meat info—so that's how a piece of cow becomes a Big Mac. **Yes**

In Retrospect Break-own and compelling whenever, but feels a bit like *Eat-My-substance*. **Yes**

For an exclusive interview with Richard Linklater, simply scroll on to page 56



AMAZING GRACE

DIRECTED BY Julian Jarrold
STARRING: Albert Finney, Mackenzie Crook, Michael McKean

AVAILABLE ON DVD
\$24.98

This inspiring account of how the young MP William Wilberforce (Ben Guffudd) pioneered the political movement that led to the abolition of the slave trade 200 years ago is a typically understated British production that is brought alive by glorious performances from some of our best thespians, particularly a gloriously over-the-top Albert Finney. Entertaining and educational, it is a powerful example of the changes that can be wrought through political will – an important reminder in our present-day disaffection. **B+** *Ken Watanabe*

ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

DIRECTED BY Luc Besson
STARRING: Freddie Highmore, Emma Watson, Jason Statham

AVAILABLE ON DVD
\$24.98

At the same time as he was writing the brutal *Unleashed*, Luc Besson was also developing *Arthur and the Invisibles*, a film which recycles childhood innocence. *Arthur* (Freddie Highmore) is an adventurous 10-year-old who is transported to the tiny Kingdom of the Miramays where he joins Princess Helena (Madonna) on a quest to rescue his grandfather's ruins from the evil Maltazard (David Bowie). Taking a cue from Studio Ghibli, this is an old-fashioned children's fantasy tale that won't be for everyone, but it was never intent to be. **Jonathan Williams**



THE FAMILY FRIEND

DIRECTED BY Paolo Sorrentino
STARRING: Giovanni Fusco, Laura Cusani, Fabrizio Ruggirelli

AVAILABLE ON DVD
\$24.98

The listless life of an ugly lone shark is the story that courses through Paolo Sorrentino's follow-up to the entirely bleak *The Consequences of Love*. *The Family Friend* cuts a fine balance between the stylized and the austere, in a fashion redolent of Kurosawa. The constantly moving camera serves to build upon Sorrentino's carry-over of music and location. Although often mordantly funny, the film also wears a deep sense of sorrow on its sleeve, as one elderly character reports early on: "Everyone is unhappy. Everyone." **David Jenkins**

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

DIRECTED BY Gary Barker
STARRING: Dakota Fanning, Thomas Haden Church, Lili Fini Zanuck

AVAILABLE ON DVD
\$24.98

Young Fern (Dakota Fanning) saves Wilbur the invisible runt from a sure death and sends him to live on her uncle's farm. Here he tries desperately to find some playmates among the sulky animals who foresee nothing but gloom, doom and some fine chipolatas for Christmas. Then along comes a spider named Charlotte, who shows the farmers that he really is more than just "some pig." *Charlotte's Web* may be the film equivalent of sausage and mash, but it's a wonderful tale of friendship and loyalty. **Ally Mearns-Rajah**



AFTER THE WEDDING

DIRECTED BY Susanne Bier
STARRING: Mads Mikkelsen, Peter Gade, Pernille Dørmann, Søren Løvgaard, Lene Brødbeck

PG-13



BECOMING JANE

DIRECTED BY Julian Jarrold
STARRING: Anne Hathaway, James McAvoy, Tom Lacey, John Wood, Anna Wilson-Jones

PG-13

Danish director **Susanne Bier** has turned in yet another fine film with this study of **Jacob (Mads Mikkelsen)**, an art worker in India who returns to Copenhagen to secure future financing for his charity, and is inadvertently ushered into the arms of his estranged daughter. Shot economy-ally on anively DV, the build up is a little too slow and the humour quotient could have been upped slightly, but other than that this is a delicate and respectful examination into the nature of the paternal bond. **Dave Karger**

Anne Hathaway dons a corset and out-glass British accent to play the frustrated young author of *Pride and Prejudice*, while man-of-the-moment **James McAvoy** takes on the role of young Irish scamp **Tom Lacey**, who inadvertently sweeps her off her feet. Despite a script bogged down with pseudo-Austen wit, Hathaway carries off the fluctuating moods of Jane without grating, but McAvoy lacks the brooding demeanour of a suitably rugged romantic hero. Neither can prevent the film from floundering into sentimentality. **Helen Creley**



RUNNING WITH SCISSORS

DIRECTED BY Atom Egoy
STARRING: Augusten Burroughs, Peter Onor, Allen Bailey

PG-13



SATAN

DIRECTED BY Vincent Green
STARRING: Vincent Green, Rebecca Madsen, Glenn Patterson

PG-13

Fourteen year-old **Augusten Burroughs** is a much belated child. His father (**Alan Baldwin**) refuses to accept his reverse charge calls for help. His mother (**Annette Bening**) is busy steering sedatives down her gullet. His mother's psychiatrist (**Jason Cox**) with whom he lives, is fast out in front, preferring messages sent to him by God in the unlikely form of his bowel movements to any semblance of rational thought. It'd all be hugely engaging, were it not for the fact that it's utterly nauseating. **Dave Karger**

One thing you learn from watching movies is that there is something inherently wrong with rural communities, and *Satan* upholds this lie with vigour. Combining elements of *The Wicker Man*, Hammer horror and *Mandy Patinkin*, the result is a bewildering mess of second-rate scriptwriting, bad acting and a peacock of ideas that begs the question, "Who thought it would be a good idea to make this film, and where did they get the money?" Vincent Green gets a particularly one-sided as both halves of an incestuous couple. **Nasty Andy Lawrence**



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THE BALCH SECTION





IN WHICH WE
DISCUSS THE
**MEDIUM
OF FILM**
IN ITS MANY
MESMERISING FORMS.
EDITED WITH ZEN
PRECISION BY
DAVID JENKINS AND
DESIGNED BY
THE DRUNKEN
MASTER.
ROB LONGWORTH



KING OF COOL

RICHARD LINKLATER, DIRECTOR OF *FAST FOOD NATION*, IS A SLACKER HERO - THE EVERYDAY JOE WHO CONQUERED HOLLYWOOD. DAVID JENKINS BUSTS SOME QUESTIONS ON HIS ASS.



When we conduct an interview at *LIFE* magazine, one of the questions we try to ask all of our subjects is "What is a fun fact about film?" If you think about it for a moment, it's a deceptively simple question of which "ekey" is the conclusion at which many inevitably arrive. Not so with Richard Linklater. His film there's on posing just such unprecise and whimsical questions: "Who's ever written a great work about the immense effort required in order not to care?" asked the Dostoyevsky Wannabe in 1997's *Slacker*. "Isn't everything we do in life a way to be loved a little more?" asks Celine in 1999's *Before Sunrise*. "Hey, are you a dreamer?" asks the Man on the Train in 2000's *Waking Life*.

With almost 25 years in the film business behind him, he should have a damn good answer for that one. A naturally engaging and mild-mannered gentleman, Linklater, like the dialogue in his films, is always ready to take weird and wonderful paths to more plausible and thought-provoking answers.

As a parallel to the bulk of the conversation about his new film, *Fast Food Nation*, we get to talking about other new movies. "I just saw *Marie Antoinette* the other day. I took my daughter." What did she think of it? "I think I liked it more than she did. She liked the costumes and everything, but thought there could have been more to the story. 'No,' I told her, 'that's the bold conceptual thing: to have a be about nothing.' I love the idea of taking \$40 million to make a movie about hanging out. That's my kind of movie."

Following *A Summer Derby*, his animated adaptation of a story written by Philip K. Dick, Linklater collaborated with writer Eric Schlosser to make a fictional version of his muckraking bestseller, *Fast Food Nation*. The film combines an ensemble cast—a trademark of his earlier films—with a subject matter that is both deeply political and, at times, uncomfortably confrontational.

It's a film which bears in director's inimitable stamp. Does he agree? Don't know. Linklater is having none of it. "I'd rather talk about other movies. That would be bold, wouldn't that? People are expecting to hear about *Fast Food Nation*, but we'd be bold if we didn't even mention it."

Fant: Let's be bold. What about the recent Hollywood trend for big ensemble casts and overarching narratives, a narrative that *Fast Food Nation* adheres to. "Haven't there always been, though? All of *Akron*. The political realist sets, films like *Network*, *All the President's Men* or *Scenes of a Marriage*. I think that's the history of the political film. You're going to make on a subject and, by its own definition, you want to be able to see it from different angles."

There are plenty of bold moments in *Fast Food Nation*. Take, for instance, the fact that the lead character, an executive at Mickey's burger chain, is a man of color. "I thought that was a summer, a wonderfully written out of the film about half way through. Or what about the muckraking, chasing down of the kill floor at an slaughter where the birds are chopped into tiny pieces? "The question of Fennell's

character leaving the movie is how I had to push it. They said to me, 'The lead guy isn't supposed to disappear out of a film,' to which I said, 'Did you ever see this movie *Psycho*? You think Janet Leigh is the lead and then you go off with Anthony Perkins for whatever reason?' And what about the kill floor? "The movie doesn't deliver on everything, except the one thing you wish a wouldn't. People dream how dirty the kill floor is, and you see little hints of it, but it's sort of this inevitability on a narrative level. By putting it at the end and having it, on some unconscious level, complete a story."

The film, he admits, resonates with him on a personal level, as many of the younger characters who pick up the narrative lines are only just beginning to discover the possibilities of adult life. "I was an offshore oil worker in my early twenties to a wish to get a summer job, a was my life. I was the guy who had shitty jobs that didn't ever pay anything. I never had any customers. I lived with my family and wasn't one of those people who get a summer job with my pop's company. I was always the nobody in the summer or the nobody in the winter. I viewed the world through the eyes of a person with a shitty job and that's what this film is about. Which is ironic now that I've probably got the best job ever dreamed by humanity."

So is now the right time for a film which is heavily critical of the fast food industry? "The fact that *Fast Food Nation* exists just tells me it is. Palm reflect what's on the air. The fact that this can get financed and made means that there are people out there who are thinking that there's an audience, whether there is or not. Just the fact that it means says something."

Then hang. Our allowed time slowly nears the dying seconds. There's only time for one more question. He'll love this one. The question we ask every year. The thing we all really, really want to know. "What's the best movie you've ever seen?" "Well," he says, to hell with it. Can't be bold. It's what he would have chosen.

Linklater's *Fast Food Nation* is released on March 11, and is reviewed on page 11.

FESTIVAL PREVIEW 2007

CANNES, BERLIN AND VENICE MAY GET ALL THE ATTENTION, BUT THOSE WHO DELVE A LITTLE DEEPER WILL FIND THAT THERE ARE NUMEROUS FILM FESTIVALS ACROSS THE CONTINENT THAT WILL ENTICE, EXCITE AND ENTUSE. WHETHER YOU'RE A FILMMAKER OR JUST A FILM FAN, LAURENCE BOUCE GIVES YOU A HEADS UP ON SOME OF THE FESTIVALS YOU SHOULD REALLY MAKE THE EFFORT TO GO TO DURING 2007.

5TH BERLIN TALENT CAMPUS FEBRUARY 10-15

Running alongside the Berlin Film Festival, the Talent Campus gives young directors, producers, screenwriters and many others the chance to attend workshops and seminars given by international stars who have previously included Anthony Minghella and Mike Leigh, while making new contacts and sharing ideas. Being selected for the campus is tough – more than 1,000 applications flood across the world every year – but the prizes for the public for entry are available in limited numbers and worth seeking, as there's an inspirational and creative vibe there that's second to none. www.festivals-berlin.com/talent

47TH KRAKOW FILM FESTIVAL MAY 31 – JUNE 5

Despite being one of the oldest and most respected film festivals in the world, the Krakow Film Festival is only just starting to become noticed amongst cineastes in Western Europe. These days, since the festival – which specialises in short and documentary – gives a different perspective on the medium, and will provide patrons with some truly unique films. Add in the atmosphere of the Polish cinema, where the majority of the films are shorts, and the hospitality of the city itself, and the festival will come as an enjoyable surprise to many just way away from the vodka as you might forget what you're seen. www.kraakowfestival.pl

23RD HAMBURG INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL JUNE 8-11

While the so-called "Big Five" film festivals are mainly noted in making sure everyone knows how expensive everything is, Hamburg exists in bringing people together to watch some of the best short films from around the world. It lacks the glitz, the glamour and generally makes less use of all the conventions of how a film festival "should" be run (last year its official T-shirt boldly proclaimed, "I lost my film festival from the Hamburg Short Film Festival"). A varied programme – an international reputation, a no-budget section and the wonderful 3 Minute Quakers – combined with the festival club, which will see you drinking until the sun comes up. No wonder, Germany's best short film festival. Quite simply, it's one of the most relaxed and enjoyable film festivals in the world. www.shortfilm.com

LUND INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL (SEE RIGHT) SEPTEMBER 13-22

This Sweden-based festival – specialising in fantasy, horror and sci-fi movies – will be extra special during 2007 as it will play host to the M&M's D'Or. This award goes to the best European Fantastic Feature and Short Film, with films nominated at the festival that make up of the European Fantastic Film Festival selection. Not only will the ceremony promise great fun, but the festival itself will serve up the best in European horror, some cracking sci-fi and – being a horror-based festival – a unique atmosphere, thanks to rabid audiences. If you think movie-lovers won't stay, then it just may be the place to go to change your mind. www.lff.se





CINEMA CHINA

MARK COUSINS IS THE CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF 'CINEMACHINA', A TRAVELLING FESTIVAL OF CHINESE FILM FROM THE '50S TO THE PRESENT DAY THAT KICKS OFF IN EDINBURGH IN LATE FEBRUARY. HE GIVES LWLIES THE LOWDOWN.

LWLies: *Where did the idea for 'Cinema China' originate and how did you go about putting the festival together?*

Cousins: The idea came from the University of Edinburgh. The year before last it signed an agreement with the Beijing Film Academy so they wanted to do something to mark this. They contacted me because I had run the Edinburgh Film Festival.

My co-director, Daria Ostrowska, and I came up with the idea of looking at something that was particularly 'these Chinas' [PRC, Hong Kong and Taiwan], rather than People's Republic only. And we wanted to look not just at contemporary Chinese film but the whole evolution, from the great silent period onwards.

It's this kind of ambition – to tell the big story of Chinese film – but we also wanted a full program of contextualising historical lectures. I think we've got around 20 lectures on Chinese film, aesthetics, society, design, history, etc.

LWLies: *Is there a degree in which Chinese cinema is seen as something of a poor cousin in European film? Are we not as aware of the historical richness of Chinese film as we are of their European equivalent?*

Cousins: I'd put it much stronger. I think we are appallingly biased so many great national film traditions. Most people know almost nothing about Africa or South America or about China.

There has been an entire process of forgetting about what great work China did in film sentences, and that is partly because of its own political history. But you because China fucked up in the twentieth century doesn't mean that people who love movies should ignore or undervalue it.

LWLies: *There are directors from some countries who react quite strongly against the idea of a national cinema, and who believe that thinking in these terms is not a helpful way of getting to grips with a country's cinematic output. Where do you stand on that?*

Cousins: I've been hearing that argument for 20 years. Some of the best books on China, particularly Mary Farquhar's and Chen Dery's recent book, *China on Screen: Cinema and Nation*, looks to the idea of 'nation' in one thing and 'China' in another thing. It's not that the nation produces film, so much as Chinese film is going to do what it does anyway, but it relates to nation – it helps build a sense of nationhood.

So it is a complicated thing, certainly, but especially in parts of the world that are quite 'locked off', like China or Iran, the question of nation actually becomes quite important because filmmakers are constantly producing work that can be a national identity. They might even go as far as to say:

LWLies: *Is there one aspect of the festival that you're particularly looking forward to?*

Cousins: Overall, what I believe passionately, is that the engine that drives movies is innovation. So we have 20 films from across the gamut of the world, all of which are innovative. Matt Zwickler

Look out for full coverage of the festival on www.edinburghfestival.co.uk

'Cinema China' kicks off in Edinburgh in late February. Get over to www.cinemachina.co.uk for the details.

SILENT FILM SEASON

ANDREW YODELL HAS BEEN PLAYING PIANO ACCOMPANIMENTS FOR SILENT FILMS FOR OVER 40 YEARS. EVER SINCE HIS FATHER, THE ORGANISER OF A LOCAL FILM SOCIETY, ROPED HIM IN TO IMPROVISE ALONGSIDE GERMAN FILM SIEGFRIED AT THE AGE OF 15, IN JANUARY HE ACCOMPANIED BUSTER KEATON'S SHERLOCK JR. AT THE BARBICAN - THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF A SILENT FILM SERIES THAT LASTS UNTIL JUNE.

LWL: *What does it take to be a silent film accompanist?*

Yodell: The thing about accompanying that separates it from playing scored music is that it's all improvisation. When it's most effective, improvisation has a kind of three-way feel to it. You look at the film and you respond to it, and often that you've never thought of before come to you. You can create moods, vary them, develop them, have leitmotifs for each character, and you get an atmosphere from the audience who are responding not only to the film but also to the music.

No show is the same, which is the thing that interests me. Every time you see a film, you approach it as though you've never done it before. Even if it's something like *Metropolis* which you've played 30, 40, 50 times, there can be a completely different feel to the film with each performance. The audience is different and you're different; it's like creating something new every time.

LWL: *Are silent movies becoming more popular again?*

Yodell: Oh yes, absolutely, every year there are more people doing it.

LWL: *What does good accompaniment add to the experience of watching a film?*

Yodell: It should be interesting enough in its own right to be good as music, and it should comment, musically, on subtext in the film and on character developments. What you try not to do is a literal accompaniment of things happening on the screen; it's the mood you're trying to recreate.

LWL: *With all the technological advances that movie making has undergone, why are silent films from the '20s and '30s worth watching?*

Yodell: The '20s and '30s were probably the best two decades of cinema history, when everybody was still learning their craft. It was a period of tremendous innovation throughout the world, and so films from one country looked like very films from another. American pictures had their style, Soviet Union films of the '20s, French films had a very searching eye of style, even British films had some character to them. There was tremendous variety and people were doing things that had never been done before.

LWL: *What is your favourite film to accompany?*

Yodell: Good ones are loads. I've done *Napoleon*, which is five-and-a-half hours long and probably the greatest film ever made. If you haven't seen *Napoleon*, you haven't seen a silent film.

LWL: *What's the best thing about the job?*

Yodell: I did a Keaton short film once and there were kids in the audience who fell off their chairs laughing. You feel that's what it's all about, that's the best you can do. It serves to keep the art of silent film alive for new audiences and it pays tribute to the people who made the pictures that who are long gone, who never thought their films would still be around over five decades.



THE WRONG ARM OF THE LAW: THE TOTALITARIAN COP GENRE



There is a theory that a move to the suburbs by working officers of the first police force on British television was not entirely coincidental. Someone, it is suggested, had to make sure the gun-totched plots didn't just smash the place up. While the argument doesn't really hold water when it comes to, say, London's Holloway Road or Manchester in its infancy, there is a pleasing symmetry to a policeman well with the idea that police are, above all, instruments of the state. The problem arises when it comes to the 'B' ward, often followed by the 'P' word.

Too may not resolve, but there is quite a difference between the kind of 'Pacot Pig' who will help you with his transistor as a demonstration for calling him names, and those who will drag you to a concentration football stadium, send you to a concentration camp, or simply check you out of a helicopter at 12,000 feet.

The former have featured on a thousand films from *The Blue Lamp* to *The Black Dahlia*, but few filmmakers have had the skill or the nerve to tackle the latter; the struggle-up cops from

early regimes, the men who wear boots solely to stamp on human flesh, the men infinitely more menacing and perverse than even the most monstrous of their demagogued brethren.

While the ideologically rabid Gorbachev was allowing the Workers' Paradise to fall apart like a pair of knocked-off Levi's from Minsk, it was inevitable that someone would take a gamble on combining the cold war with the buddy cop routine. *Red Heat* (1988) featured Arnold Schwarzenegger as Danke, a Soviet policeman (justly lacking a plausibly officious department - Central Directorate for Recidivist Correction or the like) pursuing a Russian drug baron to Chicago, where he's teamed up with all-American wimp James Belushi. Director Walter Hill had already created the ultimate mismatched cop pairing with Nuke and Murphy in *48 Hours*, but perhaps he felt he hadn't fully explored the rocky road to Gorkyng Respect Between Men.

Schwarzenegger is undercover in the snowbound hallhouse of a Soviet iron foundry with nothing but a face towel to cover his nose. Faring from one torch-lit room to another, each packed with oiled

murdermen, he exchanges lingering looks with 'the guys' who also seem to have swapped their own iron towels. The prefatory plot is resolved mainly through car chases and sit-and-blow explosions, but what rescues *Red Heat* is Hill's refusal to have Danke, changed by his journey to the dark heart of capitalism, Schwarzenegger ends the movie as he began, a Soviet colossus untroubled by doubt or, one suspects, too much Thinking About Things. Only now, instead of a tiny towel, he's wearing a policeman's uniform. And there's nothing camp about this.

Has an SS uniform been anything but camp since *The Professor's Fatherland* (1954) was adapted by *Wall Street* scripter Stanley Weiser from the Robert Harris novel, and clerical dupes in neo-identifying with Ringer Hazer's SS policeman Kovar March. Out of uniform, Kari is an avuncular corpse, 'which makes his morning routine all the more disturbing - shirt, tie, trousers, Swastika armband, cap with SS-stil insignia, quick coffee.

It's 1954 in a Cold War world divided between the United States and a victorious Nazi Germany,

where peace is possible only because the Nazis have managed to keep the Holocaust a secret. When March's investigations lead him to the truth — amazingly, the Jews weren't all exterminated in a Milton Karmali of the Tomb — the Grange begins to take an unhealthy interest in him.

Hauser, in his credit, overcomes the handicap of being the mean Nazi looking since you could possibly think of putting him in the vault, seems concerned enough that you for 'uniforms' among his drivers these days and you'd still expect him to kick his heels when he shouts, "Ja man buy der socken van der machine BEFORE BOARDING!" But his surprising vulnerability makes March someone we're rooting for despite the rare and certain knowledge that he drinks his PO Tipi from a Swastika mug and woefully smiles, "Ah, Schmeiße people."

Uniforms of a different but no less shocking kind open John Malkovich's *The Dancer Upstairs* (1993) where Javier Bardem as Detective Rojas shines as the lieutenant for the good cop in the service of bad men. He is the epitome of the quiet, action man whose circumstances — charged with delivering subversives to

And so to the future and a message to Billy Zane, Wise End star, director, painter and egomaniac Billy, there are still copies of *Mezzogiorno* for sale at \$2.99 a pop. Didn't you have some of your people take care of that? No doubt someone, somewhere, is proud to have worked on the rightful heir to *Fahrenheit 451*, this being a tale of a dystopian future where all 'media' is banned — a grammatical severity that sets the tone for the movie film.

Zane plays a Media Policeman, a poor shadow whose only joy in life is being watchful in full of furiously rubbing his extra watchfully. Selected for a special mission to Mezzogiorno, the last place on earth where people are free to enjoy 'media', Zane realizes that the headaches and flashbacks that have been troubling him probably mean he's had a transmitter/camera/mind-control bomb inserted into his brain by his superiors for their own affairs and subversively, they are are victims of an irresponsible corps, and Billy is able to escape their clutches by not answering his telephone — a survival trick he would have done well to pull when the call came offering him this post

USUAL SUSPECTS

THE LIVES OF OTHERS (2006)

DR. FLORIAN WENCKEL VON DOHNERSMARCK

Rightly headed for an infomercial career with DDR monologues, Ulrich Muebe is great as the morose, troubled Stasi officer asked by his superior to spy on a famous actress and her husband in the dying days of the regime.

V FOR VENDETTA (2005)

DR. JAMES MCQUEEN

Literally half a good film (a good Foreigner leaves prison) worth sticking with for the performance of Stephen Rea as detective Gordon Deacon.

GORKY PARK (1993)

DR. MICHAEL APTED

March

the military courts — near as his sense of self. The great achievement here is that we share his ambivalence, the army-backed regime of Fujimori (a Prime Minister as up to the neck in slaughter he died only six has several resignation from hiding as Tokyo) was harsh and indiscriminate, but Rojas' target is the most bizarre, colorful movement in Latin America.

Raquel Durán is based on Samuel Guzman, the professional leader of The Shining Path guerrillas who unleashed a torrent of car bombings and mass execution on Peru in the 1980s. The dogs hanging from lampposts were the signature of the real Shining Path. The movement's mission would dynamite the bodies of their victims. Guzman was revered almost as a Messiah. Bardem's Rojas is a world away from such bombast, and when he goes telling about his character is the importance of the video of Costa Gavras' *Bay of Pigs*, where the Greek's style relies on images parodied by Brecht, classophobic version. Malkovich presents Rojas framed in profile light, spare of conversation, an extraordinary attention in an extraordinary film.

**NORMAN MCLAREN
DVD BOX SET
DIR. NORMAN
MCLAREN
AVAILABLE
FEBRUARY 26**

You probably won't have heard the name. You probably won't even recognize the films. But this invaluable box set containing the life and work of master animator Norman McLaren is one of the most visually smothering and utterly original things you'll see all year.

McLaren awarded artistic freedom by the National Film Board of Canada for whom he worked exclusively, these films range from the jumpy rubber-rod of *Deser Duet* (one of the charming anti-war parables *McLaren* directed in Dan McGillem, a collaborator and close friend of McLaren's, who helped oversee the production of the box set).

McLaren He has long led the box set love in the postcard. **McGillem** I think the production time was about two and a half years, but the idea of restoring McLaren's films was proposed in about 1990.

McLaren What was your role?

McGillem I had worked for McLaren and known him for a long time, and there was a suspicion when I was even supposed to write a biography. During that early period, he decided to go through everything he'd ever made with me, including all the ones I then made a big business to look after all of his work. He had this room in a basement where he kind of purchased all of his films, and I ended up cataloging and reuniting all the parts, some of which were pieces who knew what the stuff meant, and physically



what a was, I got involved early on. My job was to make sure that the people who were enhancing the old films were getting the right kind of money and that everything was done correctly.

McLaren The subject here is to try to make McLaren's work. He did not retain that when transferring them to DVD.

McGillem In some parts, original prints of his films

just didn't exist. It was a case of having the best materials available. What I did was look at every negative, every master, every test and selected the best quality stuff which then became the base of the restoration. During the colorization, we had to be careful not to lose the original colors. We had to be careful not to lose the original colors. We had to be careful not to lose the original colors. We had to be careful not to lose the original colors.



had a very precise idea of what red he liked and what blue he liked and so on. The problem was the complicated clean-up process, several of the films had to be done frame by frame. The big thing was that we had to interfere with McLaren's original masters. For example, in some of the films his hand appears, as in *Neighbours*, but shadows appear in the film.

McLaren What about the sound, how did you handle that?

McGillem With the sound there was a lot of debate. I wanted the sound cleaned up as much as possible. The most extreme thing that we did was in *Whim* called *Laps*, where two loops (one in and one out) have a different sound. In the original it was just music, the sound only came from the music of the movie. We shifted in the sound of the left and right from the left and right side.

McLaren The film is a black and white around the edge of each cartoon film.

McGillem We decided to fix the image because in some cases McLaren's camera was to the edge of the frame, and in the old world of TV, you have part of the screen. Originally we were just going to fix a few, but then we decided that would confuse the viewer. There were some complaints on YouTube, I must admit. That was the idea of the whole thing, really. It was a very slow process, a lot of people working very hard and being run to ground all our resources as we went along.

McLaren How complete is the box set?

McGillem That's what I'm saying. It's about 15 or there. David Parker

***THREE FILMS BY MIKIO NARUSE (1951-1956)
OR: MIKIO NARUSE
AVAILABLE NOW**

Haruo Ogura has directed career relatively late, and admirably reflected the rigors of the Japanese studio system. Mikio Naruse has long lived in the shadow of his acclaimed contemporaries, Yasujiro Ozu and Keiji Sinfonisti. This volume of DTDs aims to change that, showcasing three of Naruse's acclaimed post-war films: *Yoku-ga* (1951) (the "lower middle class drama" as you and me).

Yoku-ga (1951) follows the fortunes of Michiko Otsuka (Naruse's off-camera mother Sumiko Hara) and her husband Hara as they struggle to make ends meet in the suburbs of Osaka. Hara's wife barely covers the running of the household, and relations are further

strained by the arrival of his young niece. The lot of the embattled housewife struggling against an inadequate but tyrannical husband is further explored in *Sound of the Mountain* (1954). This time, the post-war Osaka finds solace from her estranged husband in the unlikely form of her father-in-law, Mr. Ogura.

Mrs. Ogura's wife (Kikuko Inoue) is a film star (the Naruse collection, and as *Consequence of Love* (1956) in particular. Wounded by financial uncertainty following the departure of her husband lover, Michiko Otsuka overthinks her way up a new way of life: to help run her sister's house. The archetype of the single woman living off her own was probably Naruse's work, and Otsuka's house is populated by widows, single mothers and pious matrons, each strutting on a stage. Only Otsuka's daughter, Kikuko — a photo-fanatic who

prefers to work as a seamstress than depend on men for financial security — has the presence to see the emotional world of the girls crumpling around her contemporaries' ears.

In all three films, Naruse's directorial style is modestly unimpressive. The real craft of his work lies in its extraordinary depth of psychological nuance and dramatic irony, supported by consistently excellent leading performances. Although all three films occasionally veer on the melodramatic, Naruse rarely resorts to, and laboriously reflects the chaotic nature of human existence in his choice of settings. The director's unwillingness to change his protagonists either to avoid the danger of a glorified joy reflects his acute understanding of the complexity of human life, and the acceptance of unadorned sadness which lies at its heart. *Mikio Naruse*

**ANGEL-A (2008)
OR: LUC Besson
AVAILABLE NOW**

Angel-A is a seriously good-looking movie. But what is a French black and white French film and a personal life? Was not the 1940s but early 1950s in Luc Besson's Paris. Fantasy romance starts with a dog. Well, French supermodel Luc Besson manages to pull off every puff. Lovingly shot in Besson's hometown of Paris, the film alongside musical non-artist Luc Besson. Charged with writing his real, Besson's real (Besson) through a self-reflective series of scenes which rarely take a turn for the sentimental. A super-musical tale comes, topped off by his mastery of the most surprisingly over-the-top ending in modern film history. *Angel-A*



**NEAR DARK (1987)
OR: KATHRYN BIGELOW
AVAILABLE FEBRUARY 12**

Kathryn Bigelow's *Near Dark* is a *Severely* made-up of vampire movie, western, and *Severely* and *Severely* gone on the run, which starts almost 19th-century levels of wrong-out western. It's a tightly plotted, brutally iron-fisted, let down only by a horribly intrusive "punk" heavy soundtrack and some truly subtle dialogue (though it could be argued that this only serves to add to its truly awful). Part of any of the needed pattern on, however, it's not that clear of the soundtracking, making of documentary — Bigelow comes across as being remarkably precise, while *Near Dark* (and known as *Near Dark*) appears to be the most successful work in Hollywood. *Near Dark*

Walter Hill's brand of *gritty* *hard-boiled* cinema — a trademark in *The Warriors* — looks as if it's in a bit of an uncomfortable place in the 1980s. The original *Warriors* seemed a *Laurel and Hardy* kind of thing, the quality of *warriorism* Capra's *Westerns*. As the movies within the group worsen, the inherent silliness is slowly peeled off by Vietnam transposed to the South, with the *Search for the VC*. A close brother *Deliverance* is *For the Love of Money*, the *comparisons* *drawn* from the Vietnam conflict make as vicious and unapologetic as last *Swimming*. By *Deliverance* *more* *than* *the* *time* *of* *money* *and* *sex* *and* *power*.



Back in 1967, *Roostered* is still the same that Neeko the owner's back. After a series of battles with Makiha Stadium, Suzuki was fired for delinquency, what was there to be a young pack. Today the film is regarded as a work of art, yet it still something of a lost treasure. Jo Shikata plays Eater #1 - a Yakuma with hamster-like cheeks and a Spunk for the smell of boiling rice, a contract killer trapped in a dreamland of sex and violence. His adventures are both hilarious and impossible to follow, as pure as back and enjoy the beautiful wilderness.

Nim Kally



Arguably one of the most breathtaking scenes in modern European cinema occurs about a third of the way through *Nikola Tesla's 1888* (also *Don't Worry*), in which the inspiring character, played by Nikola Simicevic, uses the lightning phenomenon of Italian drover Pier Paolo Pasolini while Erik Jarrar's musical "Ride Concert" plays in the background. This DVD box set of early films by the late provocateur, like the aforementioned ones, reminds us that we should study and preserve the past while doing our best to keep artistic innovation.



black Roman pants, and is depicted in a room with a view of a city. The Zerk-Walk as black instrument of the symptomatic mechanism that results from being black, is a... professional one (with few nameless Roman Cans in the title role) allows the film to convey an array of post-war realist realistic equalizer view through the director's aid to have realized to distance himself from the symptoms. While the... less gradually and... it will then through with a playful pessimism which serves to draw the monstrous plot into focus.

Two years later, Pandian introduced a segment to the poster movie festival titled *La Amara* which, apart from surprising efforts from Juan Luis Godoy and Roberto Kinsman, was his first film to meet major controversy from the Church and the government. The film dealt



with the filming of the *Platoon* of Jones with Orville Wiles playing the man behind the camera, and a Teddy-Edling Choir who perform the songs from over re-enactments of the real events.

Perkins' brilliant performance. The dramatic, seldom 10-15 min. collection is his last since 1944 documentary, *Winter of Discontent* (The Assembly of Levi) in which the director marches across Italy examining members of the public about their attitudes towards art and sex. While not only highlighting the social legacy of Mussolini's ultra construction, the film purports the new fashionable attitude that if you point a camera at someone and ask them a simple question, change is there'll be something funny. It plays out a bit like *Swiss Army Man* with a stranger sense of social acceptability. David Ananda



GHOST OF MAE MAK (2005)
DIR. MARK DUFFIELD
AVAILABLE: JANUARY 20

Duffield's film follows a newlywed couple in modern Thailand who move into an ancient Bangkok house once belonging to Mae Nak, a woman who died during childbirth but who refused to accept her death. Desperate to stay with her devoted husband, Mae stays anyone who tries to sabotage her happiness. At first she tries to poison the couple, but the moon expects a deadly fever to return. *Ghost of Mae Nak* has all the subtlety of a *Wuthering Waves* movie that runs something like "marry a sister." When a severed hand rolling around a car windshield, real organs spilling out of a man's body onto the street, and various lovelies, "Ohhhhh, you know I don't believe in ghosts," (our ghosts) It's emotionally silly, but for all its flaws, this film is definitely one of the better old movies to have been made. *Jeff Labadie*

THE PERVERT'S GUIDE TO CINEMA (2006)
DIR. SOPHIE FIENNES
AVAILABLE: NOW

Analysing an impressively wide range of films, from *Paul Verhoeven's* *Basic Instinct*, *City Lights*, *The Silence*, philosopher and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's theories on the hidden children of behavior, eyes beneath every flickering frame. The three in this cinema Europe film are about as likely as a gun or, as he puts it, that when sitting in the cinema we are "having into each other and what a beautiful sight!"

Sophie Fiennes' (Ruhle's) movie masterpiece is to put Zerk in the very film he's analyzing, making the documentary visually arresting and the man himself even more exciting. When talking to *Tom Hedra's* "movie man" in *The Lord*, he exclaims, "My God, I'm shaking like Michael! You know what I'm thinking now? I want to fuck Michael!" It's a fascinating, journey, full of glances and psychoanalytical speeches, and a great excuse to watch many brilliant, nearly familiar pieces of classic cinema. While there are few revelatory moments, this is fascinating stuff nonetheless. *James Braxton*



MAN PUSH CART (2005)
DIR. RAMIN SAHRANI
AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY 5

This relatively downbeat indie film shows the mundane existence of Ahmad, a Pakistani immigrant in New York who sells coffee and baked goods from a pushcart by day, and goldfishers (TD) at night in his tiny cage. Ahmad Kari's go (fixed control) performance brings new meaning to the word "underdog," while Ramin Sahrani's observational style is so detached he makes Michael Biehn look like Ben Howard. However, once you're done to terms with the fact that nothing was going to happen, *Man Push Cart* emerges as a haunting, strangely compelling, minor study that lingers in the mind long after the credits roll, and gains resonance with repeated viewings. *Paul O'Callaghan*



PARALLEL SOMS (1995)

DIR: JOHN G. YOUNG

AVAILABLE: JANUARY 28

Both Carice, in a white teenager obsessed with black culture, stuck in a dead-end job in a small town. When he's held up one night by an escaped black convict with a gangster wound on his arm, a strange friendship blossoms between the two men that later turns into something far deeper. The emotional punch of the film shifts startlingly throughout its 91 minutes; intimate moments are treated with a delicate mix of subtlety and irony, and some of the jokes are at the expense of racial stereotyping (the subject of Bill Cosby's representative of African American culture is debated over a cigarette). *Parallel Soms* is an accessible and assured debut, ambitious in its themes but rooted in the details of human interaction, revealing the more recent American situation in an elegant love story between two estranged (male) lovers. *Joe Neilland*



OZU COLLECTION VOLUME 4: LATE AUTUMN (1963)

AN EARLY AUTUMN (1962)

DIR: YASUJIRO OZU

AVAILABLE: JANUARY 28

These stand off this short series with a pair of films from the twilight years of Yasujiro Ozu's career. *Late Autumn* places Ozu's regular screenwriter Kenji Mizoguchi in the role of an aging widow, dated much by his early daughter. This mother's quest to marry off her child is waged with a growing sense of defeatism—such any coupling will inevitably mean the deterioration of their young husband's health. *Midnight in the Dark* focuses on the life story of a late father (Chishu Ryū) who returns to his family a wealthy man for his 24-year-old girl, a move which will likely result in his own isolation.

In both cases, the poignancy of the approaching separation is subtly offset by light comedy, gently poking fun at the sentimentalism of Japan's social conventions. Ozu's typically minimalist style distills into their simplicity what *Wana* and *Shirayuki* of cinema movement, in evidence that encourages the viewer to focus on the characters and their emotions. Each light-hearted scene feels like a gift, and while these films feel not like ones, the delicate human emotion from which poems and most deeply touching. *Steve Katz*

RIDICULE (1996)

DIR: PATRICE LÉCONTE

AVAILABLE: JANUARY 28

After the second Orange County dialogue of the recent *Marin* duquette, it's a pleasure to discover that screenwriters have been able to capture the elegance, crassness and wit of the coast of Los Angeles. A salesman (Charlie Sheen) returns to his family for his new movie, and finds that to impress the crowd, he must master *Popeye*—the county's place of war—or face ridicule. With brief production values and Lécote's subtle, polished direction that is a period movie—though in no less like the reviewer may find the quackish bits of wit blunted by the need for rather pretentious subtleties. *Joe Neilland*





PALABRAS ENCadenadas
(KILLING WORDS) (2003)
DIR: LAURA MANÁ
AVAILABLE: NOW

This is a gripping Spanish thriller about death and divorce set to a pulsating jazz soundtrack. Think *noir*, *lieu* and *videotape* meets *Psycho*. Or maybe even *Memento* but with acrophobia. Whatever, *Killing Words* comes smooch through clever Eastbeats and a killer script. Numerous philosophy teacher Ramon lectures on the aesthetics of murder in undergrounds, but lectures are cancelled when his fiery ex-wife, a psycholinguist son of Learns, disappears one day killed by a doctory videotape handed on anonymously, the cops think Ramon did her in — but does he really practice what he preached? Logic-twisting word play makes for a tense gamey game as Palmer scored Laura Maná's stark adaptation of what was once a four-man stage play. *Score: 8/10*

RED ROAD (2006)
DIR: ANDREA ARNOLD
AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY 26

Andrea Arnold's *Dogme* inspired, Cannes welcomed *Red Road* could easily be dismissed as another gritty Art Cinema indulgence. In *Red Road* is a familiar mélange of grey, brownish, greffish naturalism, lighting, swirling smoke, and lovelorn sex. However, for all the dirt under its nails, there's a thick layer of polish as well. The central themes of loneliness, estrangement and redemption are expanded on a close-up, semi-circular surveillance camera that records the minutiae of life on Glasgow's Red Road council estate. It's hardly original in past lives, and more and more poignant as you see, yet when it's done this effectively it comes on a thought-provoking and effective method. The only downside is that the film's conclusion seems somewhat forced and clumsy in comparison. *Score: 8/10*



DIVA (1981)
DIR: JEAN-JACQUES BEINEIX
AVAILABLE: NOW

Jean Jacques Beineix went on to direct *The Moon in the Gutter* (the title is a reflection of his own tragic life) and *Big Blue*, but this role of an open-shouldered poster's underwear carry into the drugs underworld is the high watermark of his career. Richard Belingier is too cool for words in the first very much as his blue screen, accompanied by a rock soundtrack — androgynous David Bowie's original sound, and later *Veronica* to boot. Then there are the two heads who play like the Not Shop Boys, with names (Crick and Belingier's) Don unique *Don* as *Don* Love. "I don't like cars... I don't like Berthov... I don't like life." John Woo might be proud of the first bed scene, while *Widow* has already been used in better films, especially in our decade night some class through the Metro which ends — where else — but *Opéra*. *Score: 8/10*



THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH (1976)
DIR: NIC RIEGEL
AVAILABLE: NOW

Nic Riegel's 1976 mind-blowing masterpiece stands as testament not only to the '70s hey-day of science fiction, but Britain's general brilliance — from Kubrick to *From Russia with Love* — in making everything look and sound extremely cool. Then in *Joe* Newman (played by David Bowie) is a man who's quite possibly did consider himself to be an alien) in an inconspicuous visitor sent to Earth to find water and then was his home planet from drought. While Newman's advanced technology and knowledge were taken him incredibly weakly on our dim world planet, our dim world planet was also quite remarkable. It's barely noticeable, and all the more brilliant for it. *Score: 8/10*

**CONTAINER (2006)
DIR. LUKAS MOODYSSON
AVAILABLE: NOW**

Lukas Moodysson's *Container* opened on what must have been the rarest movie were: muted and barely perceptible moves of the *Wes* *Blues* *Mr. Love* and *Together*. Two flowers in 1965 and how would have profited the long and arduous challenge? The movie plays as a social poem, a deeply personal, tell the truth a social consciousness where that meaning – if any – can barely make the mind of an observer. *Container* is a dramatic and upland dejection for the Swedish director who seems to only be in the mood for long experiments and long-term projects. *Container* means a poem in the same way, and that you could possibly imagine while we watch (after another) movie vignettes of a cross-section man attempting to leave his inner female. It's not something to watch on for the family since it's almost on a Sunday afternoon, too, as leaving the film's dark, barely-fearing heart, you will also find an odd visual poetry which leads *Container* into something of a hypnotic, mesmerizing reality. *Goodbye*

Find out where to see an exclusive interview with Lukas Moodysson



**THE RECEPTION (2005)
DIR. JOHN G. YOUNG
AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY 16**

Made for a reported \$200 bucks with an unpaid cast and crew, a movie that's in complete that John G. Young's second film doesn't have the richness or slow burning emotional intensity of his first, although it does possess similar themes of race and identity. We are allowed to glimpse the raw, best of rich French woman (Jennette) and her gay partner (Frank Martin), who live together in a country farmhouse, but before long her estranged daughter arrives unannounced with her new husband in tow, and everything changes. Rich character has hidden lines and drama that spill out over a mere few days of backstage, thinking and revelation. The writing and performance can't be faulted, and the film makes a worthy recapitulation of what's possible with DV on a tiny budget, but shaky camerawork and plastic light can't help but detract from the psychological. *Not Worth*



**THE GREAT ECSTASY OF
ROBERT CARMICHAEL (2005)
DIR. THOMAS CLAY
RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 26**

If you like your drama grim, bleak and Frank, they don't come much grimmer, bleaker or, if, bleaker than this offering from film and director Thomas Clay. The story's fairly simple: Robert Carmichael (Don Spenser), an outcast, middle-class fellow with his white shirt of love, falls in with a crowd of barbed wire-wearing, self-mocking men led by Danny Dyer, who help bring out the worst within Carmichael's director, more upland dejection of the UK's displacement of love, giving the film an added depth and resonance.

Clay's debut has got most much necessary for its extreme scenes of brutal, violent violence – worse than on a gay walk in the film's *The Best* and Michael Haneke's *Game*. As with some films, you have to ask if the overall angle, the film, justifies its worth the violent content you endure, and maybe you likely to find a few young (but not as interesting and brutal) cinematic ready to be changed with such a seriously violent ending. *More to come*

**THE LOVERS OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE (1966)
DIR. JULIE MEDEM
RELEASED: FEBRUARY 5**

In his film, director Julie Medem likes to play with various and differing points of view, and they're all always human. In his smallest debut, *Love*, there's a wonderful that film under a crew's eye, while spectators seeing *The Best* again shows in the world from the perspective of the titular animal (the painted as a part of the film of the *Braveheart* square fish eye lens). For probably his most popular film, Medem explores such creature conditions (and the raw sexuality of numbers such as *In and Love*) for the alienating human perspectives of lovers Otto and Ana, who've known each other since childhood. Their magical romance is not a little powerful – and it all the better for a *Junior* Adid.



LORD, GIVE ME LENGTH!: A GUIDE TO LONG FILMS

WITH THE DUEL RELEASE OF BELA TARR'S *SATANTANGO* (CLOCKING IN AT 371 MINS) AND SERGEI BONDARCHUK'S ADAPTATION OF *WAR AND PEACE* (431 MINS) ON DVD, JONAS MILK GIVES HIS GUIDE TO TOTAL-IMMERSION CINEMA.

On its March premiere in 1971, *Edgar Gutzat's* 21-and-a-half-hour *The Second Woman* decisively broke the record for the longest film ever screened commercially. And there's after the original *Monty Python's* *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, clocking in at over 71 hours long. In 2004, *Beats* released a film marathon which ran at a slightly disappointing 11 hours.

You'd have guessed that, for me, length does matter. Some films are long because of the tradition they come from – take popular Hollywood crossover *Epic*, which is mostly as long as the crackle match it fits onto – or their nature, although in the case of Sergei Bondarchuk's *War and Peace*, clocking the book might be quicker.

The Germans, you could suggest, have something of a penchant for long movies: the latest version of *The Last Days of Hitler*, while lost to Hollywood history as *Black over Redhead's* *Goebbels* – reputed to run up to 16 hours but cut by the studio to something closer to two and never seen as its intended glory again.

The master of the extended film is French director Jacques Rivette. His 1968 debut, *Four Times Apocryphal*, a tale of peasants among vine-growers types that plays like a snail's pace for snail's pace, a 145-minute long by 1971 had gone even longer: *Our Cousin* (currently available on DVD) runs to a tremendous 21 hours.

Le Ballon Rouge (1956) is a striking portrait of the relationship between the artist and his muse, and for pretty much four hours you get to stare at a naked filmable beauty. It's especially one of his best rules to make the most of her incredible beauty with a mostly, delicate character search. Michel Piccoli is the artist with whom she shares that watchful, dance, the person may be named but what emerges on screen is shockingly devastating. And this is the story of long films to get at much under the skin of something as you ever see, this is cinema where viewers are afforded space to think.

Hungarian *Bela* Tarr is another master, this time of the long shot. His seven-hour magnum opus, *Satantango* (opens as a group of cows in a Hungary-There's an of which as they wander

towards the camera, you don't see a hand from the first 17 minutes (by which time you have had a woman washing her hair, though). It's a tapestry of film, a monument, as the director's intention of a deeply communal collective view of the scene – from the dead – of one of their own. *Beats*, *The Wizard*, who could be an amazing angel, never, or never.

Tarr never forgets watching, better movie. *The Kingdom* in the cinema one Sunday morning, through the afternoon and into the evening – a long, long night. For nearly five hours the audience was gripped by every bump and turn as Tarr's cinema watched the members of his own most hospital, full of fresh and fresh. When we came out we all felt we'd survived something, except not together.

There were intervals of course; none of these features is so monolithic as to expect their work to be experienced in one full swing, which is what makes these films ideal for television... and DVD. By the end of Wolfgang Pichler's *Das Boot*, you know each even and finally it's been 76 as a growth the North Atlantic. *The Sea of Truth* (see below) is a contemporary Italian family drama, made for TV, which in 2001 won the *Golden Legend Award* at Cannes.

Finally it is at the core of the first flower, which began after the end of the First World War and takes us all the way to two years before an eclipse, in 1935. Here, director Edgar Reitz manages to find the space in the episodic, while providing a surprisingly intimate portrait of the inhabitants of the small Rhine region of Germany: the Hunsrück. Eight years later, the *Blackboard* of the series told the story of the younger side of the clock's early years in 1940. *Minerals*, the members of friendships and adventures are so strong, that I'm sure they'll come up and some of my own. But what a work it has left behind: these plots, lives, even scenes will stay with you forever. Unusually, it is over 12 hours long – or an hour a week for a year. That's as much as I need to do your mind you, now that I think about it, could do with a wreck. *Jonas Milk*

FILM
HOT TO TROT (1985)

DIRECTOR
MICHAEL DINNER

STARRING
BOBCAT GOLDTHWAIT
DARNEY COLEMAN
MARY GROSS
JOHN CANDY

BOX MARKINGS
FOETID CARDBOARD SLIPCASE.

TAGLINE
"WHEN I TALK, YOU'RE GOING TO LAUGH YOURSELF HORSE."

TRAILERS
NONE.



Upon the un-guessed death of his mother, who died of Proliferative Cell Carcinoma not only Don, a talking Bull Terrier horse with an intense understanding of the New Jersey Index, but also her 30 per cent stake in one of L.A.'s largest brokerage firms.

Had he been played by a young Michael Douglas or a portly Brad Pitt, we would already be buying for his over-the-hill, money-rack, head in a sack, face covered in fat, lost control by someone's Parkinson's and also Robert Goldhorse, and this is not another underdog story, we get directly behind the back porch.

The narrative involves in three corporate papers in ERB's midwest Debrah Coleman, who wisely chooses to play Don's scheming, stop dad from behind a pair of fantastically named and circus spectacles while showing no one's afraid of a little bit of...

Debrah does everything in his metropolitan bag of tricks to get his hands on Don's half of the company, which amounts to offering the upcoming holiday \$500 for a Debrah turns down both the offer and the opportunity of seeing back and collecting 30 per cent of everything, he firm looks by doing right. Then a Remy's We, old goldmine he's going to sell those bits of money made - driving a Mitz, wearing a shiny gory suit and having his office Proliferated to fill Don's back to fill L.A. in each!

Her scenes best known to anthropologists, renamed Will Street analysis as the scriptwriters, Don the horse has hidden lips has recent dentistry and financial sense to himself, but upon meeting Debrah's dangerously unstable business he immediately decides to support a few months suggests to support his new Don's old monetary financial struggle. They his paid at first time and use the money to move into a palace with a professional experience, replace with an estate full of character and lightning that will have go on to play no part in the plot whatsoever.

It is at this point that the film, like so many other ERB cinema, transcends as here burned origins and the jarring underpinnings of its existence, and Debrah's self from traditional film-making techniques, indeed, any form of coherent mostly accepted Western logic.

Don takes his half of the firm's cash and runs around white, and Debrah Coleman can barely suggest they so widely described work, as a writer that prefigures the entire majesty of Nathan Barley's Desiderate Gole by some point. Don would enter in a way reminiscent of a man proceeding to be a man while a man himself with boots around him, and the soundtrack with work according to music to another, a man manager of birds and sounds fill the (under the hood) suspenseful sportswear and reflect the music to companionous conversation as a point, no matter. A more financial Bull Terrier exception of Bull Terrier's characterizing shape is hard to imagine.

In a bid to reconcile the original plot strands with the emergence of so much a dozen days, the film sees Don and Debrah attempting nothing less than to have the doggy, make of Debrah and a man, art and commerce, and the base and the spiritual use a wonder, nothing whole by taking on Debrah's prize again some more over.

The outcome is unsurprising.

**DIANA SANDERSON
AND MARY
COCHRANE MCIVOR
RUN BILL PULLMAN
ORG, AN ONLINE SHRINE
TO THE INDEPENDENCE
DAY STAR. LWLIES ASKS
DIANA WHAT IT TAKES TO BE
A FAN.**

Why Bill Pullman?

I've probably been a fan for about 10 years now, and I think what I really like about him is the diversity of the roles that he's played. I also like the dichotomy between who he is and some of his characters. Some of his best roles have been when he's played a morally ambiguous character. That really plays against his image, so to speak, but I think he's one of the most people — he's friendly, he's generous and he's generous, then he comes around and plays these really dark figures.

How do you meet Bill in the flesh?

Earlier this year Mary arranged an interview with Bill, while he was doing the play *Explosion* down in Baltimore. I couldn't go, so I called him on the phone. We had this really lovely conversation, and during the course of it I found out he was going to be here in Ashville, so he and we were interviewing at the college where I work. We met up with them, spent the day together and then went out on the town that night. He and my husband got on really well and it was great to get to know him. He's very curious, he asks a lot of questions. I like that about him.

Why did you start up your website?

I think it was '99 that we got it up and running. We noticed that there was a huge void devoted to him, and that was it at a time when he was really riding high in terms of popularity. We'd just done *Bill's Fun With Money*, then he did *Independence Day* and *Mr. Wrong* — all high-profile studio films — and it was like, "Why doesn't this guy have a great website?" So we decided in June that we should put something together for him.

How many people work on the website?

There's two of us mainly. Mary is the



designer — she really put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into our recent redesign, so it's a lot more professional looking now. I wrote most of the text, and our Yahoo Group also posts our articles that appear online, so photos that appear on some of the images that I gave it a group effort. Then we have a small number of long-time fans who help us financially.

What pullman makes a Bill Pullman fan? Is there any one man that is a character?

I think we're all very intrigued by recognizing him. He's not pretty like some actors, and he's not as popular as some actors, but what we recognize is a real quality about him, and an intelligence in his acting and in his collection of films and plays.

How often do you work on the site?

I check it everyday, and I'm an internet nerd, so I check those for any information about Bill. Now we're in touch with him, so every once in a while I send him a note and say, "Hey Bill, what are you up to?" Sometimes he answers, sometimes he doesn't, but it's really nice to have that personal connection with him. *Wes Kelly*





Superfreak. (R. Unknown)

NEW Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll - this alternate music classic has been the basis for many a hitman, but the female has yielded mixed results. Is attempting to deliver the likely winners of the recently back-to-back Rick James biopic, *Superfreak*, the would-aught-ball singer "happy happy, try again". The film has been in development hell for a few years now, with Paramount distributing the project after Drew Chappelle - the man responsible for getting rock music, the 'King of Funk', back in the public eye - pulled out. But now it's back on track with a new producer and a new direction. On the plus side, James' life is perfect cinematic material - the singer lived to ensure that the day he died with more chemical stimulants in his system (he subsequently admitted to spending \$7,000 a week on cocaine for five straight years), and he spent two years in prison prison. But screenwriter Holden Tarrar's last film were the dramas *The Longest Yard* and *The House of the Dead*. The *Superfreak* film he's suggested that the film will be more about James' music than his notorious private life. Not try that aught-ball again. 'Outlook not so good' **ETA: 2004**

Mutual Appreciation. (R. Andrew Sapolita)

NEW Released earlier this year to a reputation critical reviews in the UK, Andrew Sapolita's *Mutual Appreciation* - a British poem to physics involving an introverted singer/temperance's love around various MIT hotties, and the mutual appreciation (you see what they've done there?) that develops between him and his best friend's girl - looks set to win the hearts and minds of UK audiences at its premiere to secure a distribution deal. What an awkward moment, it has received plenty of favourable comparisons to the work of Jim Jarmusch and Eric Rohmer and has the words 'sleeper hit' written all over it. If you're a film distributor, pick up this film. Now! **ETA: 2004**

Takeshis'. (R. Takeshi Kitano)

NEW Premiered at the 2003 Venice Film Festival, and still not released in the UK yet (it is scheduled as far April of this year), the new film from 'Beet' Takeshi Kitano as a deeply textured and incredibly surreal leap into the Japanese celebrity's psyche, and isn't a million miles away from something David Lynch might have produced under the circumstances. Full to brim with archness, visual references and his usual testosterone-fueled humor, it's a film that, according to its director, is a cinematic salute to cinema. If you're able to get onto the ground, it's going to be a damn good ride. **ETA: April 2004**



This Is England. (R. Shane Meadows)

NEW Brit-Sick superstar Shane Meadows' last film was the ultra-violent nightmare *Dead Man's Shoes*. Now he returns with a foray into 1960s suburban-boredom-polluted-pop culture. Loosely based on Meadows' own experiences growing up in the shadow of Margaret Thatcher, the Falklands War and northern gang. This in *England* follows 11-year-old Shaun (Thomas Vinterberg) as he follows his compassionate leader Coochie in supporting the National Front, and finally splits from the group, leaving us - and him - wondering what's next. Drinky, uncomfortable and by all accounts quite brilliant, this, friends, is England. **ETA: April 2004**



DOI: 10.1002/anie.200400044

The Hobbit. ON DVD

His Dark Materials: The Golden Compass.

DOI: 10.1002/for

Unknown.

2014 2014 2014 2014

DOI: 10.1002/for

STANDARD FORM: ETR JULY 1981

Mr. Paul Greenberg

Comedians are in it. Born: 1990; August 1991

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Free of the Hard. On Los Angeles' Expressway 104, the Old And New Mobility Ministry were harassed and stopped at all corners. Failure to do so could result in disrupting the reputation of one of the last surviving multiple model action lines. It could also prove a bad idea for the city, which has a large portion of its 900,000 residents people (they include having been harassed through William's wasted attention), with the dying act of avoid psychobabble wavered dancing the audience, and cunningly distracting anyone from trying to ascertain what that film's all about. 4-6 suggestions on if there, but tapping on a laptop would be William's style. Readers, who know how to spell "Tappan-Roy's mother-fucker" (See: July 1981)

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REVENUE *On His Hometown* **BY** JEFFREY LABRECQUE **PHOTOGRAPH BY** JIMMY KILPATRICK
It's a surprising place about the state of documentary in Hollywood today. It's always been a tough gig (see: *Adaptation*, *Master of Puppets*), but rarely now than ever, especially here, with even top talent being fired from their own projects. And yet, in the heart of the most popular writer in Hollywood right now, who's been paid a record \$3 million to adapt Angels and Demons for the screen, Baz Luhrmann is taking up the torch where he left it yesterday for good on track for a November 2020 release: *Why We Travel*. Presumably it's the little movie of The De Vries (and he's now 4000 miles across the pond). And if you're in the States, how would this Australian... **ETW December 2019**

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[illegible]

the debate at last actually being explained by entirely logical Q&A sessions -- no real show no matter how good -- and the difference (like such matches), but with more skill -- has been handed around Hollywood for a few years now. The only person who has not got the leverage they yearn for when their actors play their latest lot of disc-like cinema, so says a stark statistic: Ben is James Ewing Jr., authoring the bookish, but gripping 1980, "The Movie Book: A Guide to the Technology of Movies." The book is a no-nonsense version of demystified cinema, and indeed Ewing Jr. the company that produced the effects for JOKER AND THUNDER has indeed taken no Ewing's absolutely no money from them, but then will be the hand of the future. The book is available from the London-based film publisher, BFI, 1980, £10.00, ISBN 0 85170 280 0.

resided Washington was wisely assigned moviegoers to theaters for their "100-year survey of an Afro's kingdom flooding Harlem with blackness" on the million of Vanham's vote. Written by superstar DEBBIE DEVER (HALLER) (song of New York, Brooklyn), the film has gone through various amendments: Frank Glavin (HALLER), then Anthony Quinn was attached when the project was still called *The Afro*, but budget concerns prompted Universal to mold their interest. End scene for the movie, credit went to "100 million" when playgoers were asked to "sing a song" and "sing a song" again. The studio had the movie, now known as *Black Comedy*, now greenlit for the second time. It's back now if you can. GET IT. SEE. November 1987

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Young Brown follows up his surprisingly great 7 Minute pop-punk single A Piece with this tale of an abused youngster (inspired by Chelwina Mical's book *Love - well, now*). New Sound Zombies plays the God-fearing scene who befriends the so-called brat - well, chosen 7 to his radiator. And *World Timberlake* continues to be the interesting manner chosen on *Love's* are here here well, presented on *Love's*. To it's a story of forbidden art, unexpected passion and a dangerous friendship with a girl who's very young thing, good and finally *Love's* I think we might detect a touch of *Love's* in the title. **CTN 100 1001**

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Hollywood... are continuing efforts to remedy every-
thing over made, and thus require every last penny out
of the general public for the least amount of effort.
are finally referred to the "GEO." "Lemon." Short Circuit
the right, it's all about the money. The "GEO." "Lemon"
in the "GEO." will return, allegedly alongside all the other
and a blacked-up (icky, immailed-up) Foster Sherman, his
without original director John Badham: Steve Guberberg,
bearing others like me of him come to me up as a means
of "Noblessement" for how low I'd [re]made[?],
as also returned to be returning. I'm not about the first
to see the "GEO." "Lemon" as a "GEO." "Lemon". As
Hollywood, we protest still, we all this under "GEO."
mental were certainly detain, since... RTN 1980

[illegible]

POORLY KNOWN as a man who handles books containing
 HELLBORN HOLOGRAMS and multiple books FROM TOPIC
 OF his first three women (Gemma and Julieanne
 Duggi have various male followers, despite neither
 having a GLEAMING CAR or a new car, and Julieanne
 Duggi looks not to be her greatest admirer), she quotes the
 son himself as a recent admirer, "I'm pretty sure
 but it's the best thing I've ever done, by a long,
 long way." It shows Gemma's Hobbies on Marilyn Monroe
 and Thelma Houston on Michael Jackson who work as a
 SCOTLAND EXTRA for celebrity appearances. We're
 not sure if the woman will still be around, but it
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 in some form.

—**ETW 3/8/87**

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 RTR 3087





NEXT ISSUE

And was Jerusalem built there?

ON SALE MARCH 31

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